Roger Starr: Miami in the Mind of the Americas

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FEBRUARY 1988 A MONTHLY REVIEW EDITED BY R. EMMETT TYRRELL, JR.

The Baby Boom Goes Bust • *Washington's Summit Gorbasms*

Are We Headed for World-Wide Depression?

The Enigma of Bob Dole, by Robert Novak

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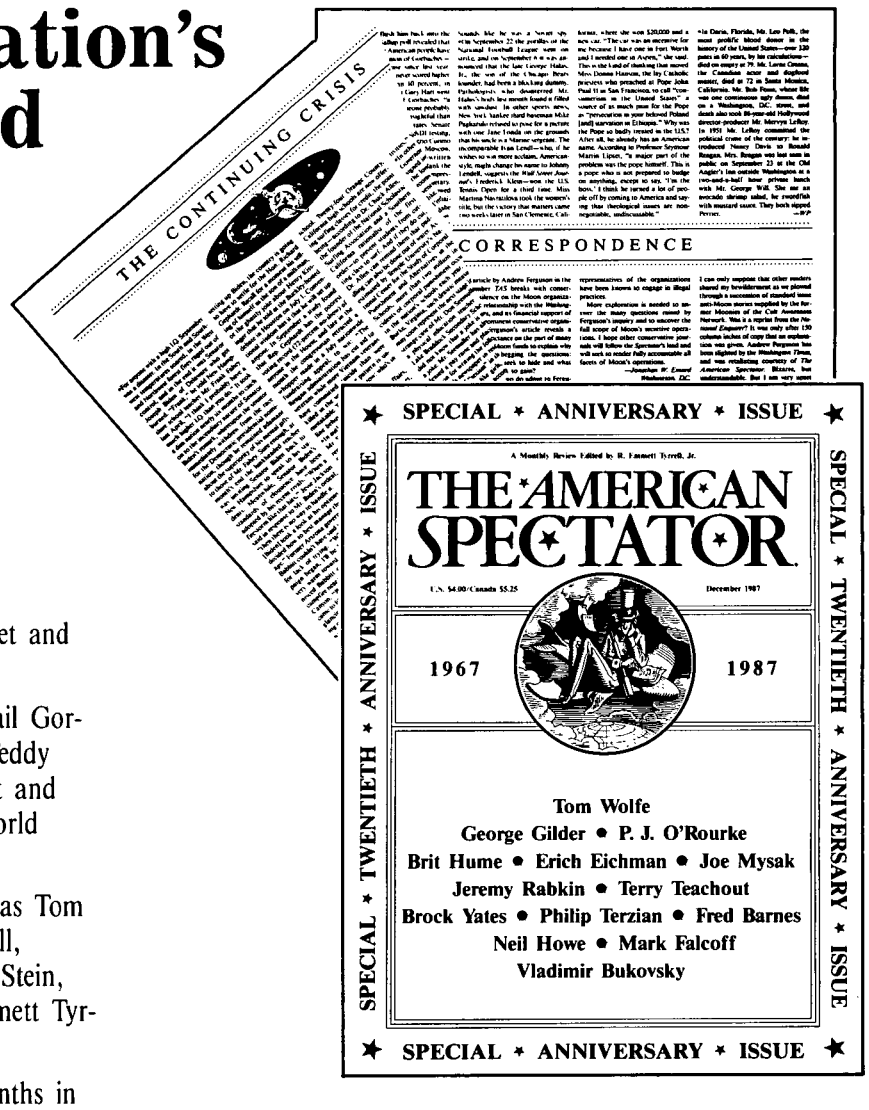
THE CONTINUING CRISIS
CORRESPONDENCE
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SPECIAL * TWENTIETH * ANNIVERSARY * ISSUE

The White House gets it . . . so do members of the Cabinet and Congress . . . and you should too. That is,

. . . if you'd love to give a hot foot to the likes of Mikhail Gorbachev . . . the Iran-Contra committee . . . Jesse Jackson, Teddy Kennedy, and People for the American Way . . . Jim Wright and Daniel Ortega . . . and every posturing, pompous, Third World diplomat.

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. . . if you're interested in knowing today's gut issues months in advance of their making the national press and network news.

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And sometimes the Spectator's impact has been immediate: within a week after Fred Barnes's cover story on "Senator Jello" Paul Trible hit the newsstands, the wayward Republican unexpectedly announced he would not run for reelection.

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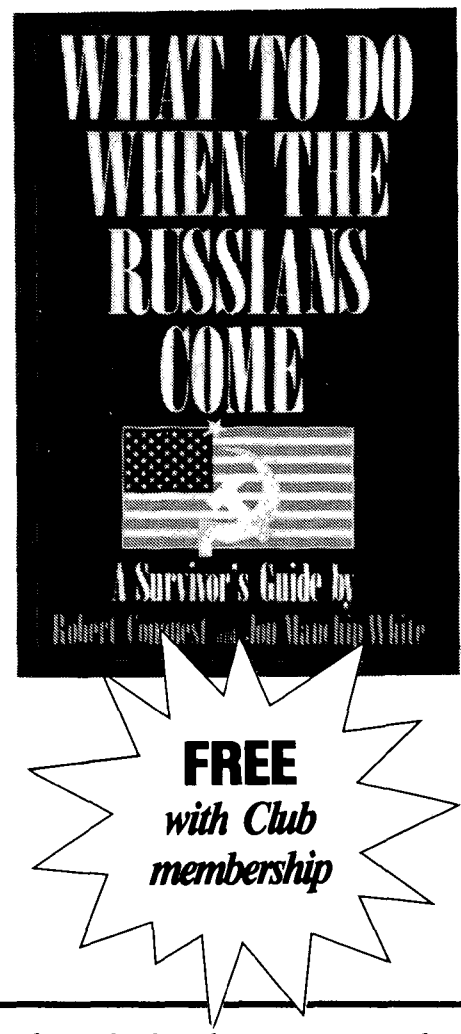
Strange advice from the authors:

BURN THIS BOOK

But that's only the beginning, if the peaceniks have their way and Russia ever does take over. The alternative might be to spend the rest of your days up near the Arctic Circle.

Say, what's going on here? Has the Conservative Book Club suddenly started offering kooky books?

Not on your life — and we use those words advisedly. This one is by Robert Conquest, who probably knows as much about the Soviets as any Westerner alive today. Conquest, now a senior research fellow at the Hoover Institution, wrote the classic study of Stalin's reign of murder, *The Great Terror*. Co-author Jon Manchip White is the Lindsay Young Professor of English at the University of Tennessee. So you'll be reading a serious book about a grim possibility. This isn't a *1984*-style fantasy. *This book is based entirely upon what hundreds of millions have suffered when the Communists took over — but with ingenious variations added especially for America.*



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- The chilling war-and-its-aftermath scenario "commonly found in Soviet military literature."
- When famine hits America: watch for these telltale signs beforehand.
- Major immediate problems, not excluding gang rape by the invading Russian troops (who will be called "peacekeepers").
- Raising kids under the new regime.
- From the official Soviet list of people subject to repression in the Baltic states, some lessons.
- What will happen to your house. Your car. Things you take for granted now that you'll drool over then.
- The New America: 7 characteristics.
- Where the resistance activity will start. What it will have to do first. How the Communists will counter the freedom fighters. Where to learn about guerrilla warfare, and about *surviving*.

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What are the facts?

■ Israel is still paying for all the wars forced upon it since its birth. Out of an annual budget of about $20 billion, more than one-third, about $7 billion, is for repaying and servicing of that debt and $5 billion goes for defense. That leaves just $8 billion to run all other services of the country. In making peace with Egypt and returning the Sinai, Israel gave up the oil fields it had developed, which yielded an annual income of over $2 billion and which made Israel independent of oil imports. Israel also gave up the enormous investment in some of the world's most advanced and sophisticated military bases, and the cities of Yamit and Ofira.

■ All of these sacrifices did indeed create a major economic crisis, which resulted in inflation, unemployment and stagnation. But for the last three years, Israel has put into effect wide-ranging recovery plans, leading to economic stability and renewed growth. The results of these plans have exceeded expectations: Inflation was beaten without causing recession, unemployment declined, the budget deficit was reduced to 4% of GNP, and the Bank of Israel's foreign reserves almost doubled.

■ The energy and resourcefulness that has enabled Israel to absorb over 2 million immigrants and to convert a desolate land into one of green fields and modern cities are also reflected in Israel's economic development. Israel is a modern industrial state, whose output encompasses some of the most advanced technology and sophisticated production in the world. Industry is concentrated in high-technology and high-added-value products. It is based primarily on domestic scientific and technological creativity and innovation.

■ Israel is a leader in the fields of medical electronics, military electronics, civilian and military aviation, agri-technology, telecommunications, computerized graphics, fine chemicals, solar energy, water desalinization, and computer hardware and software. Traditional industries include food processing, textiles and fabrics, furniture, fertilizers, rubber, plastic, and metal products. The highest growth rates are in those branches that require heavy R & D investment and sophisticated production techniques.

■ Israel is the acknowledged world leader in the diamond industry. It produces over 80% of the world's output of small polished stones. Israel is also the developer and the world leader in the drip irrigation technology of agriculture. Israeli equipment and this technology are now being used with great success in the arid regions of the United States and in many developing countries (some of which don't acknowledge the "existence" of Israel).

■ Domestic tranquility, a western legal system, the superb university network (centered on Hebrew University in Jerusalem and the Technion in Haifa), the full infra-structure in transport, commmunications, and utilities, but primarily its educated and motivated population make Israel attractive to foreign industry. They are also aware that the highest level of R&D work is performed in Israel and that is costs around 40% less than in the U.S. Such companies as IBM, Digital Equipment, Intel, National Semiconductor, Motorola and many others have established plants and design centers in the new industrial parks mushrooming around the country's academic institutions. Israel has a Free Trade Area agreement with both the E.E.C. and with the United States, the only country in the world whose goods have preferential tariff reductions and duty-free access to the two most important markets in the world.

Israel's economy is healthy, is vibrant and growing, and offers countless investment opportunities in industry, agriculture, real estate, tourism, commerce, mineral exploration and much more. This is a country that started totally from scratch, less than 40 years ago. It is almost totally devoid of raw materials, has poor soil, and scant water resources. Yet is has fought five major wars, has absorbed and settled over 2 million immigrants, and has created a formidable industrial/agricultural society. The emerging nations and "third world" countries should take the economy of Israel as their example.

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The American Spectator was founded in 1924 by George Nathan and Truman Newberry over a cheap domestic ale in McSorley's Old Ale House. In 1967 the Saturday Evening Club took it over, rechristening it *The Alternative: An American Spectator*; but by November 1977 the word "alternative" had acquired such an esoteric fragrance that in order to discourage unsolicited manuscripts from florists, beauticians, and other creative types the Club reverted to the magazine's original name.

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THE CONTINUING CRISIS

•Month chases month and suddenly 1987 is a cadaver. December has expired, but not without Campaign '88 getting the Candidate of Ideas back into the race. On December 15 the Hon. Gary Hart announced his reentry into the Democratic presidential race for the selfless reason that no one was enunciating ideas of high-grade cerebration. Of a sudden, all over the Republic poets and essayists, scholars and Renaissance Men were set adream. Our Gary is back! Plato is with us! Mozart is restored! Galileo is vindicated! Alas, there are rumblings offstage. The Democratic sachems are not happy to observe that all such an obvious humbug had to do was reannounce his candidacy and hesto presto he is neck and neck in the polls with the theretofore Democratic front runner, the Rev. Benito Mussolini Jackson. This is the goofball condition of the Democratic party, and so the sachems conspire to undo the Egg Head of the Rockies—'twill be but another of mankind's sins against philosophy.

•Mr. Alexander M. Haig, Jr., by far the most entertaining of the Republican candidates, has been referring to the Democratic candidates as "the sad-eyed six." Now that the Hon. Hart is in the race, will it be "the sad-eyed six and the glassy-eyed one"? There is, withal, more good news for the Republicans. The Hon. Jerry Brown has come home to California fully intent on returning to politics, and do you know where he returned from? A Zen Buddhist retreat in Japan! Hence, the exotic east may have presented candidate Hart with a perfect running mate; and, as speculated upon here last summer, Mrs. Hart may yet get to sleep alone in the White House.

•Earlier in the month, all twelve Republican and Democratic candidates for the presidency met at the Kennedy Center in the greatest political debate in the history of the world, though the Nielsen ratings hardly hiccupped. In Satellite Beach, Florida Mr. Gary Craycroft, a mail carrier, was censured by his superiors for committing an "unsafe act resulting in personal injury" after he leaped into an automobile that was rolling uncontrollably toward an elderly woman and two gasoline pumps; and the Chevron oil company has ordered handicapped scouts to desist from selling Christmas trees near one of its stations because the trees conceal the station's location. Mr. James Baldwin, the novelist whose work essayed American malevolence toward the poor and the black, died in the south of France in rather plush circumstances given the gravamen of his *oeuvre*.

•December 7, 1987 became the United States' second day in infamy. After having tea with Mrs. Thatcher in England, Mikhail Gorbachev, the Soviet JFK, flew in to our nation's capital to sign a treaty eliminating intermediate range missiles from Europe and to show Washingtonians his swell new Italian suit and suave ways. Mr. Gorbachev's very presence served as an incomparable euphoriant for President Ronald Reagan and all his critics to the left. His critics to the right were dour; one, Mr. Howard Phillips of the Conservative Caucus, went so far as to call the President "a useful idiot for Kremlin propaganda." That line did not go over very well with Mrs. Reagan or with her confidante, Mr. Jerome Zipkin of the New York tenement fortune. Mr. Zipkin is being groomed by Mrs. Reagan to be Secretary of Wealth, Fashion, and Interior Decor when that agency is raised to cabinet level, and if Mr. Phillips crosses Mr. Zipkin's path in the near future do not be surprised to hear that Mr. Zipkin pummeled the boor with a handbag or another nearby deadly instrument. He is a loyalist.

•Washington, a morbidly humorless town, naturally accorded Mr. Gorbachev's visit the utmost solemnity, notwithstanding the fact that the Soviets were having a ball at Washington's expense. Yet some of us hastened to apply the edifying illuminations of frivolity. Over at the West Wing of the White House this magazine's editor, when asked by three fellow writers invited with him to an "exclusive" interview with the President what he would ask the President, turned the writers' eyes into gigantic radar screens of horror by answering, "I intend to look the President right in the face and ask him precisely what evidence he has that Mikhail Gorbachev is not a woman." "Oh, you can't," they squealed as they saw their moment in history transformed into burlesque. But there is really no hard evidence to indicate that the Russian charmer is not a woman, and Mikhail does have a peculiar walk. At Remington's, a saloon on Capitol Hill, the Raisa Gorbachev Look-Alike Contest was won by Mr. Rick Latham, an interior decorator who wore a brunette beehive wig and a furry hat along with an acrylic fur coat, black stockings, and black-and-white pumps. Need we say more?

•In Pacentro, Italy, the home of Miss Madonna's grandparents, city fathers are plotting to raise a "bronze bust" of the legendary songstress in pursuit of "economic and touristic benefits," according to Mayor Raffaele Santini. In Williamsburg, Virginia, campus police at the College of William and Mary arrested Mr. Tony O. Mitchell after he was spotted at a women's athletic field running naked, or at least partially naked. He had a knife. In Port-au-Prince, Haitian officials canceled elections after at least thirty-four voters perished in the democratic orgies.

•In the United Kingdom, the extraordinary Lord Belstead reviewed the Wildlife and Countryside Act and overruled all challengers by placing on the protected species list the wildcat, the pine marten, and the much beloved dormouse, for years an essential ingredient in soups at many of London's finest men's clubs. Mr. Michael Pascucci, 37, suffered arrest and humiliation when he left the Fidelity Bank of south Philadelphia, which he had just robbed, and walked smack into a 35-mile-an-hour wind that blasted his loot into the hands of waiting gendarmes. Swedish authorities again reported the incursion of foreign submarines into their territorial waters, and Nicaragua's minister of defense, Sr. Ortega II, announced plans to create a 600,000-man army. The goal was seen by President Oscar Arias of Costa Rica as contrary to his Nobel Prize–winning plan.

•Mr. Michael Deaver was convicted of lying to a federal grand jury, and faces a maximum of fifteen years' imprisonment and a $22,000 fine, though enlightened opinion favors a firing squad. Mr. Deaver's defense was acute alcoholism; but he called no witnesses, believing perhaps that his drunkenness was plain to anyone familiar with his public life in Washington or the news reports of his forthcoming Washington memoir wherein he brags of having banished conservatives from Mr. Reagan's presence. Yet the jury convicted him anyway, and soon it will be off to Lompoc for the congenital louse. Time wounds all heels.

•In South Korea's first election in more than sixteen years, the system worked and ruling party candidate Mr. Roh Tae Woo won 36 percent of the vote. In London's Arrow Park Hospital two surgeons whilst at work in the operating room turned on each other and engaged in such furious fisticuffs that one, Dr. George Jacobs, was admitted to the hospital's casualty unit. At Harvard University philistinism has triumphed over art. The renowned Miss Ritsuko Taho instructed students in her Fundamentals of Sculpture to adopt a chicken (*Gallus domesticus*), watch it be slaughtered, cook and consume it,

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and then use the bones in creating sculpture. Three students have rebelled, one explaining that "it would be like a pet, and to take your pet and have it killed is not a comfortable thing for me." Miss Leah Zuch, the executive director of the Cambridge Committee for Responsible Research, an animal rights group, adjudged the project "disgusting." "That's an awful way to think of art," she said. No one knows on whose side the local pro-abortion groups might have sided.

•Finally, there is good news for readers of *The American Spectator* and for those who hang out in our nation's libraries. After many years of modestly suggesting that the *Readers' Guide to Periodical Literature* was remiss in not including this great journal in its list of periodicals, it has agreed to include us beginning in March. The life of the mind grows stronger.

—RET

CORRESPONDENCE

Elie Kedourie Replies

As Mark M. Jilka rightly says (Correspondence, *TAS*, January 1988) in response to my October article "Cruising for a Bruising: The U.S. in the Gulf": "one of the reasons for the U.S. failure in Lebanon in 1982 was the fact that the military was given a poor framework to work in." My fear is that this is also the case in the Gulf today. As Mr. Jilka will appreciate, what constitutes a sufficient military force is to be judged in relation to the policy objective. It is not at all clear what the U.S. policy is in the Gulf today. Is it the defeat of Iran? In such a case, are the forces in the Gulf able to mount an invasion of Iran? Or is it to maintain the freedom of the seas? If so, then one has to say that preventing Iranian attacks on shipping is not enough to achieve that objective. As everyone knows, Iraqi attacks on shipping go on continuously and have gone on for a number of years. Nothing was done and nothing is being done to stop them. Is the objective to persuade or compel Iran to end its war with Iraq? It is not clear that this objective, if accomplished, would necessarily advance U.S. interests. It is these obscurities which have led me to express doubts and fears in my article. As the weeks pass, the doubts are by no means diminished.

Kudos

I have just finished reading your Special Anniversary issue of December 1987. I shall re-read it at a future date at a more leisurely pace to make sure I didn't miss anything. However, I must report that your publication has done little to promote harmony in my household. Your publication arrived at a time when my wife decided to discuss several matters of great interest. Unfortunately I became engrossed in reading your home-wrecker and my attempts to convey rapt attention to my wife's comments met with little success. If it weren't for the preceding forty years of happy marriage, ours would have been doomed!

—George Savage
Aledo, Texas

Allow me to add my voice to the chorus of congratulations you will be receiving on your 20th Anniversary issue.

The quality of your staff, contributors, and those whom you draw into your orbit is simply amazing. You have produced a memorable, fascinating, and thoroughly satisfying number that I have just finished reading with delight from cover to cover and to which I shall certainly return more than once. I was particularly touched by Stephen Harris's letter which I read with swimming sobs. Anyone who writes like that is a great soul.

I have now lived four times twenty years and can scarcely hope to share in your next anniversary, but I can say that *TAS* is one of the things that make life still worth living. *—Alvin Laidley*
Carmichaels, Pennsylvania

Your Special Anniversary issue is a huge success, the best of holiday reading. I send special praise for Tom Bethell's "I Hate to Spoil the Party" and your symposium, "Astonishing Moments." In the latter, the observations were so good that it seems unnecessary to name the best, but I was grateful in particular for Taki, James Q. Wilson, Arch Puddington, and R. Randolph Richardson, whose final paragraph is a masterpiece of scholarly perception.

If other readers are as enthusiastic as I am about the "Most Astonishing Developments of the Last Twenty Years" by twenty-eight distinguished observers, you will doubtless hear from many undistinguished observers with their own views on the subject. . . .

—Hazel Sample Guyol
Arkadelphia, Arkansas

Fred Barnes's article "A World Apart" was a bull's eye. I have noticed over the years that more and more members of Congress have deserted their local teams back home and become staunch Washington Redskin fans. I hadn't paid much attention to the Redskins since the Bears beat them 73-0, but lately I have been rooting for them to lose.

—W. J. Provance
Oceanside, California

The most astonishing thing about your "Astonishing Moments" in December was that not one of the contributors so much as mentioned what unquestionably should be regarded as the single greatest achievement of the human race: landing a man on the moon, on July 20, 1969. That is the most astonishing single *event* of the past twenty years. Perhaps the most astonishing *development* of the last two decades is America's retreat from that pinnacle of achievement. Its omission by your contributors (the selection in its stead of Bill Buckley's—Jonestown—being by contrast the most pathetic) is tragic testimony of that retreat.

—Jack Wheeler, Director
Freedom Research Foundation
La Jolla, California

Early in a television series dealing with the subject of civilization the late Kenneth Clark stood before a magnificent Gothic structure, pointed toward it, and informed his audience that while he could not define "civilization" he knew it when he saw it: "And I'm looking at it now," he added.

Of course there are those whose cultural instincts are so dulled that they could stand contemplating Lord Clark's cathedral for a millennium and see nothing but piled stone. Just as there are those whose instincts in such matters are etiolated to the extent that they can be subjected to the manifestation of civilization's opposite, barbarism, in the form of rock music and not recognize it for the fundamental, irremissible rot that it is. Allan Bloom's chapter on "music" in his exquisite unmasking of the Unreal City we all live in, *The Closing of the American Mind*, has caused more than a few by their reaction to it to reveal such a retrogressive incapacity. And Terry Teachout in the December issue of *TAS* is the latest I've noticed to so flash open his intellectual trenchcoat, as it were, only to expose an embarrassment of cloddish stultification. Not surprising, and typically, he fails to make the least effort to meet Bloom's argument; lacking the minimal courage to avoid vulgar euphemism, he simply satisfies himself with a witless solecism: "In your ear, Allan Bloom."

It is clear that Mr. Teachout is suffering under the false impression that Bloom is hypothesizing the removal or disappearance of the particular fix for trousered apes in question, and apparently the thought alarms him greatly. Terry may relax: what Bloom is merely saying is that extensive exposure to rock will result in permanent deafness to what he calls the "great tradition." There is another source for anxiety, however. The pertinent accumulating medical evidence indicates that the result will be deafness, period—to all sound: the barbaric rattle of pebbles under the receding wave as well as the great non-returning song of civilization.

So if nervous Terry Teachout, intrepid guardian of the conservative ethos, is correct—if his prediction is borne out and the gray boomers stay home for a TV jolt—the emerging image is quite delicious to consider. We may anticipate multitudes of pathetic rock-addled deaf-mute nostalgiacs freaking out under tubelight to the mindless throb of . . . s-u-b-t-i-t-l-e-s! Oh consummation devoutly to be wished! The return of civilized silence. *—Neil G. Barclay*
Salt Lake City, Utah

I thoroughly enjoyed the "I Remember Bloomington" section in the December Anniversary issue of *TAS*. Seeking an escape from my youth in Mayor Daley's embattled and corrupt Chicago, I found refuge in the small-town innocence of Bloomington and the naturally beautiful surrounding countryside of Monroe and Brown Counties (a five-minute motorcycle ride from campus) from 1965-1976. While *TAS* was beginning in 1967 I was a liberal idealist who helped circulate our own newspaper "The Spectator" to help activate politically indifferent students on campus. At that time the conservative publication "The Alternative" was a joke on campus, as were the Young Republicans or the Young Americans for Freedom who would meet in an isolated room in the Student Union with little or no effect on the student population of Hoosiers.

After I returned to the "real world" my religious commitment as well as the basic conservative ideals of my youth "returned" as well. I have been an educator teaching about The American Constitution and the ideals which motivated the Founding Fathers. My memories of my years in Bloomington are rich and warm; there were none in your article that I had not related to

(continued on page 47)

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EDITORIALS

WITH RON AND GORBO

by R. Emmett Tyrrell, Jr.

On December 9, with a heroic portrait of irascible old Andrew Jackson gazing down on him in the Oval Office, a benevolent President, mellowing through the last months of the longest presidency since Ike's, expounded to four journalists on his benign view of the world. I have heard him purr like this before. Then as now his subject was world peace.

Back in 1984, Ronald Reagan met with several of us in the White House library. He was tired from the campaign trail, and he stumbled ineloquently over several burning issues of the hour, but on one issue his utterances were explicit and even vivid: his hope for an arms control agreement with the Soviet Union. His interest in this sort of thing is not sudden.

Now he has his agreement. Twenty-four hours before our latest interview he signed a pact with Mikhail Gorbachev to eliminate all intermediate-range nuclear missiles from Europe. Seated in the Oval Office he looks the part of a leading man. His 76 years are not evident. He is fit and alert. His shoulders and chest rise like those of a man who either trains with weights or has found the elixir once sought by Ponce de Leon. He is in good color, albeit his unfortunate nose has suffered from cancers and scalpels. Though red-rimmed, his eyes twinkled as he went through a range of emotions: joviality, confusion over his critics, pique over right-wing impudence, magnanimity—but, trust me, none of that adolescent euphoria that the Washington press corps keeps looking for. Rather his mood is benign.

What brought this renowned hawk to negotiations with Mr. Gorbachev were three perceptions. Mr. Reagan has long perceived Mutual Assured Destruction in response to Soviet aggression as an immensely dangerous strategy. He perceives Gorbachev as a unique Soviet leader. And some time ago he perceived that his policy of military buildup and tenacity at the bargaining table had brought the hour for an agreement at hand. In 1983 over the opposition of various species of anti-nuclear activist the United States brought intermediate-range missiles to Europe, responding to the Soviets' unprovoked deployment of their SS-20. Then, by 1987, Mr. Reagan saw that it was possible to return Europe to the status quo before deployment.

The President's alarm over MAD, of course, was what initially inspired him to pursue a space-based defense—"Star Wars." He has been reiterating his alarm for years, and in our interview he termed the MAD strategy "uncivilized." He hopes the present INF treaty will be instrumental in moving the United States away from MAD, though he recognizes that the present imbalance in conventional forces in Europe must be eliminated and he still is avid for Star Wars.

Equally important in the President's decision to meet and conclude this agreement with the Soviets is his sense that Gorbachev is different from past Soviet leaders. Of the four Soviet leaders who have ruled during the Reagan presidency, "this is the first Soviet leader that has openly discussed . . . that there are flaws in their economic system"—and with ill-concealed pride Mr. Reagan mused that *glasnost* might "partially confirm some of the things that I said before about their system." Moreover, Mr. Reagan thinks it significant that "in the past, Soviet leaders have openly expressed their acceptance of the Marxian theory of the one world communist state." Gorbachev, the President went on to say, "has never said that." And in 1988 Mr. Gorbachev will allow Russians "to observe the millennium—the thousandth anniversary of the baptizing of a Christian in . . . Russia."

Finally he feels that his policy of "strength and realism" has been vindicated. So maybe it is appropriate that Old Hickory gazes down on him in the Oval Office. President Reagan believes that he has been tough and that he has prevailed. But as our interview trailed off into suspicions uttered about his motivations, he worried aloud that the record of his foreign policy as well as his domestic achievements would be lost to history owing to an "inaccurate" press. His apprehension is legitimate. □

Adapted from RET's weekly Washington Post *column syndicated by King Features.*

A MESSAGE FROM MIRANDA

If Congressman Henry Hyde was mad before, imagine his anger now. He was exasperated over Congress's passage of an arrantly unconstitutional legislative sausage that would attempt to prohibit the President from encouraging other countries to assist the contras in their war against the Sandinistas. Now it has been divulged that the Sandinistas plan a 600,000-man army in sleepy Central America. The Nicaraguan minister of defense, Mr. Humberto Ortega Saavedra himself, has confirmed it; and Congressman Hyde believes that it is unwholesome to American security for the Sandinistas to transform Nicaragua into another Cuba—not a Cuba walled in by inhospitable seas, but a Cuba bordered by poorly defended nations vulnerable to Nicaragua's agents and armies.

While our Congress conjures with ever more legislation to render our government inconsequential outside the borders of this great Republic, Nicaragua is actively projecting force among our neighbors. Though bankrupt, Communist Nicaragua has been supplying military equipment to Communist insurgents in El Salvador, Costa Rica, and Guatemala. All of this is, of course, in contravention of the Arias regional peace accord signed by the Sandinistas last August.

Some years ago, when Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan was our ambassador to the United Nations he spoke

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of the world as a "dangerous place." The term caught on. Of course, Mr. Moynihan was assisted by the blatant inhumanity of those who were bringing oppression and holocaust to Southeast Asia, and by those who were waging regional wars and engaging in bloodthirsty acts of terrorism. He might also have spoken of the world as a "tricky place." That it most certainly is, and it would be immensely salutary if this term struck a resonant note with Americans, particularly Americans on Capitol Hill. Perhaps if we recognized how tricky the world can be, our Congress would allow American diplomacy the latitude it needs.

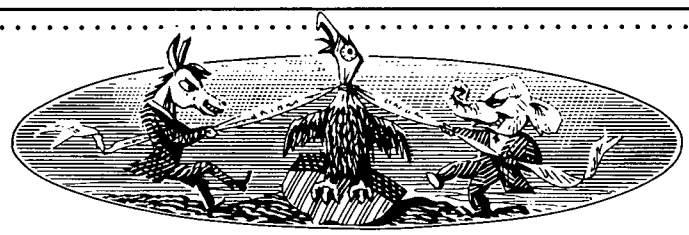
For even as Mikhail Gorbachev was telling President Reagan that the Soviet Union intended drastic reductions in its military support of the Sandinistas, Major Roger Miranda Bengoechea, a recent defector from the Sandinista military, was notifying the American press of joint Soviet-Sandinista plans to equip 600,000 Nicaraguans with such utensils of peace as flamethrowers, gas masks, 252,000 AK-47 assault rifles, and a squadron of MIG-21 fighter jets. This too does not comport very well with the Sandinistas' promise in the regional peace accord to limit military growth. In fact, both Major Miranda's revelations and those of Minister of Defense Ortega suggest that the Sandinistas have all along had no intention of abiding by the Arias pact.

That is the bad news. There is also good news. The Nicaraguans who are opposing the Sandinistas are fighting better than ever before. In fact they have so ferociously engaged the Sandinistas that the Communists have exhausted Soviet-bloc weapons and ammunition that were supposed to satisfy all the Sandinistas' earthly needs until 1990. Without committing American troops, the Reagan Administration has found a force that is exhausting the Sandinistas.

Now the House of Representatives has voted to end support to the contras and even to bar the President from asking other nations to support them. "This is shoutingly, seismically unconstitutional," the Hon. Hyde now shouts. "We cannot tell the President he can't enter into understandings with other nations." Even the Congress's Iran-contra report acknowledged that "the Constitutional plan did not prohibit the President from urging other countries to give money directly to the contras."

Well, apparently since it issued that report last November, the Congress has moved even further to the left on foreign policy. By a vote of 215-200 it hopes to control what the President says to foreign governments. Do you remember how much amusement we all had with Jimmy Carter in the White House? Apparently there are 215 Jimmy Carters on Capitol Hill if we would but take the time to scrutinize their antics. Yet Major Miranda's revelations are no laughing matter. Soon or late the United States is going to have to respond to Sandinista ambitions. Better that we respond now by aiding the contras than respond later with our own troops. □

CAPITOL IDEAS



THE BLINDFOLDED SYNAGOGUE

by Tom Bethell

"Blindfolded, the Synagogue still moves forward in the universe of God's plans. It is itself only gropingly aware of its path in history." So wrote Jacques Maritain in the early 1940s, in a long essay entitled "The Mystery of Israel" (reprinted in *Ransoming the Time*, a Maritain collection). He suggests here that "Israel"—meaning not the country, which of course did not then exist, but the Jews considered as a whole—have a "mysterious historic mission," which he contrasts with the mission of Christianity:

"Whereas the Church is assigned the task of the supernatural and supratemporal saving of the world, to Israel is assigned, in the order of temporal history . . . the work of the earthly leavening of the world." Maritain compares Israel to "some foreign substance, like a living yeast mixed into the main body," which "gives the world no quiet." "It prevents the world from sleeping, it teaches the world to be dissatisfied and restless so long as it has not God." The "communion of earthly hope," it "stimulates the movement of history." Israel, Maritain boldly added, "is charged with activating the history of the world."

Tom Bethell is The American Spectator*'s Washington correspondent.*

I found myself thinking about these weighty matters at the time of Mikhail Gorbachev's extravagantly praised visit to Washington. And of course what was of particular interest was the huge Jewish demonstration on the Mall, on behalf of Soviet Jews denied the right to leave the Soviet prison camp. In mid-November its organizers promised that it would be the biggest gathering ever of Jewish protesters in Washington, easily surpassing the 12,000 who assembled in Washington for the June 1973 visit of Leonid Brezhnev. In the event, over 200,000 gathered on the Mall in 1987, some coming from as far away as Alaska.

"They came together on the Ellipse and marched to the Mall, throngs of people with but one thought," according to the *Washington Post*, "captured in hundreds of signs that carried the historic appeal of Moses to the Pharaoh: 'Let my people go.' The message may have been somber, but the tone was joyful on a blustery day filled with Hebrew songs, the warmth of a family celebration, and above all, hope."

In *The American Spectator*'s 20th Anniversary issue, twenty-eight eminent commentators discussed "the single most astonishing development of the last twenty years." Although a number of prominent Jewish intellectuals were included in the symposium, no one mentioned what I believe may well have been the most remarkable development in this period: the ever-increasing Jewish mobilization against the Soviet police state—a development wholly confined to the last twenty years but of particular significance in the last ten.

If this trend continues, as it gives every evidence of doing, then it bodes ill for the Evil Empire.

Evidently the Jews have now decided, at some invisible level of collective unconscious, that the world has had enough already of Communism, and that it is time to swing the searchlight of publicity onto the single most repressive feature of the Soviet system: the fact that the country is nothing more than an enlarged prison camp from which no one may escape without the permission of the privileged prison-guard class of Party officials. It is one thing to know this in one's mind. It is another thing entirely for the world to be reminded of it by endless reproachful demonstrations.

I realize that these events are represented more specifically as demonstrations against the denial of emigration rights to Soviet Jews. But I think everyone realizes that no one is allowed to leave the country without special permission, and that drawing attention to the plight of Soviet Jews does simultaneously draw attention to the plight of all. And indeed we are now beginning to see ancillary protests on behalf of Ukrainians, Latvians, Lithuanians, and so on.

From the point of view of continued Soviet stability, all this is highly dangerous. The Jews for the most part do not wish to be perceived as threatening to the Soviet Union, and if we can accept the metaphor of the Blindfolded Synagogue groping its way through history, we can easily imagine that many, perhaps most of those who participate in these demonstrations do not see themselves as threatening to anyone; merely as trying to help their fellow Jews.

"Organizers say their protest will not have an angry or anti-Soviet tone, but a respectful one, in the hope of getting tangible results on the issue of Jewish emigration," John Mintz wrote in the *Washington Post* three weeks before the demonstration. Greeks clambering aboard the Trojan Horse before it was dragged into the unsuspecting city of Troy might well have offered analogous reassurances, although I suspect that the Soviets are

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far from unsuspecting when they gaze out on the Jewish throngs. "By contrast," Mintz added, "a smaller New York-based Jewish group, which believes the mainstream groups are sellouts, is planning a sit-in near the Soviet Embassy on 16th Street N.W. to protest Gorbachev's visit." Like the leftist demonstrations in Washington which span the liberal-to-Communist spectrum, the Jewish rally was a *coalition* of groups. (Beware of coalitions, I always say.)

Most of those who participated in the Washington demonstration probably really do think they would be content if only Gorbachev were to turn reasonable and grant exit visas to those who have applied for them. Gorbachev of course would be unlikely to make any such wholesale concession (and would be weakened if he did), but if he were to do so he would I am sure instantly find himself hemmed in by even larger demonstrations, both at home and abroad, Hebrew-singing and yarmulke-capped, with prayer shawls aplenty, on behalf of others still held captive, and at that point one senses the dream of New Soviet Man and the Vision of a New Society would have all but run their course.

The Soviets themselves do see these demonstrations as anti-Soviet. As Gorbachev flew to Washington, stridently anti-American articles were published by Tass, denouncing "raging anti-Semitism" in this country. (Interesting, you see, that the Soviets even in Tass feel obliged to pose as the true friends of the Jews; showing that they have already conceded in principle to the Jewish demonstrators.) A Washington correspondent for Tass said that the "aim of Sunday's action [the demonstration] is to try to smear, in the eyes of Americans, the Soviet Union and its government, to try to stop the positive changes in the attitude of U.S. public opinion to the USSR which are taking place now, and which are expected to increase. No wonder that the Zionist gathering got the blessing of the White House." The protest, he said, was "a bid to poison the atmosphere of the upcoming negotiations by U.S. Zionist organizations."

Apparently subordinating news to détente, the *New York Times* did not publish these comments. (The *Los Angeles Times* did, however.)

These Jewish demonstrations are dangerous to the Soviet system because they will inevitably shape public opinion about that system. The point is that when considering "the Soviet system," it is a great mistake to think of it as confined simply to a country, to a geographical area—something that exists within the Iron Curtain. George Gilder is now telling us, in a different context, that geography is not destiny; that nation-states are passé. By the same token the protracted conflict between Communism and Liberty, often visualized as though it were embodied in two antagonistic territories, is in reality a war of ideas in which national borders serve merely to confuse the real issues.

We do in fact have in the U.S. plenty of people who, without ever having joined the Communist Party, are in practice on the Communist side. Basically they believe that credentialed people should have the right to give orders to ordinary people. Many of them teach at universities and preach in newspapers. And of course there are even more Russians who are on the side of Liberty. That's why they have a steel fence around the country—to stop such people from running away.

The problem is that so many of us, out of habit, still think in World War II terms ("there's no such thing as a good German," and so on). We still tend to think of "the enemy" as someone who can be located geographically. Taking advantage of this confusion, some Communist-sympathizing media propagandists love nothing better than to show us "ordinary Russians" who

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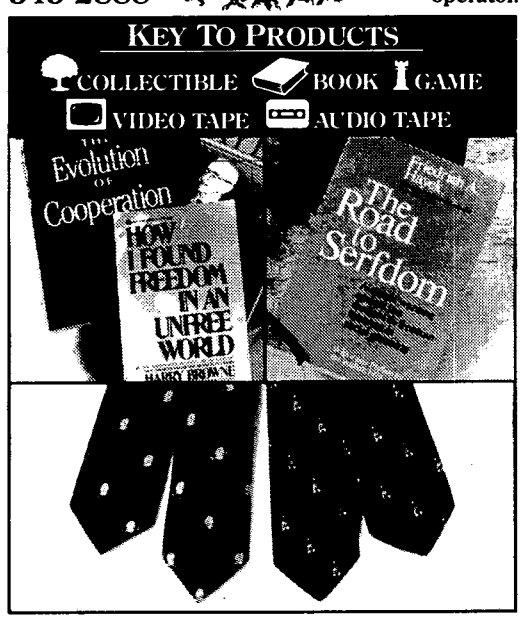

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are supposedly newsworthy because they "want peace just as much as we do." Of course they do. But they also want the liberty that their government denies them. At the time of the summit NBC's "Today" show broadcast some disingenuous footage of ingenuous Nashville housewives who had been admitted to the Soviet Union and were shown on camera meeting their peace-loving counterpart Soviet housewives. "Just like us!" (How misguided we have been to wage cold war against such innocents all these years.)

Because geography is no longer important (but ideas are more so than ever) it also strikes me that all these comparisons of conventional forces between the U.S. and the USSR are irrelevant, indeed anachronistic. We are misled by those ubiquitous charts showing that they have twice as many tanks as we do, twice the number of ground troops, or whatever. These are World War II categories. Emphasizing them merely leads to more absurd arms control charades which play into Soviet hands by allowing the Soviets to masquerade as our "partners" in the search for peace. I don't believe the Soviet army is any real threat to Western Europe, any more than I believe the Soviets are about to launch a World War II-style *blitzkrieg*. Soviet soldiers are slaves, remember, and many of them would no doubt construe an order to move westward as an opportunity to escape.

What has really sustained the Soviet system over the last seventy years has been the knowledge that out there, beyond the Kremlin, beyond the Iron Curtain, there has been this powerful ideological support group in the West: the Progressive Forces, the true believers, be they liberal or socialist, who stand in the same relationship to the Kremlin as worker bees do to the queen bee of a hive.

The queen bee cannot survive alone. She is completely dependent on the support of the hive. Likewise, Moscow is dependent on the spiritual and ideological support of its progressive worker-bees—the Hive. And it is the Hive that the anti-Soviet Jewish mobilization now threatens.

All along it has been faith that kept Communism going. I sensed this strongly myself one day in 1986 when I stood inside the very Kremlin walls—at the Focus of Evil! The Queen Bee feels entitled to use force and coercion to attain its ends only so long as it is reassured that its workers (the progressive forces all over the world) continue to believe in the system and to toil laboriously to deflect all criticism of it.

Soviet rulers are perpetually and justly filled with doubts as to their own legitimacy. That is why they (and their Hive supporters) love summits. Now the protests, the hope-filled demonstrations, the Hebrew songs, the yarmulkes and prayer shawls threaten to delegitimize the whole socialist enterprise.

Despite the many absurdities of the recent summit, engendered primarily by President Reagan's eagerness to win liberal approval (apparently he believes that the liberals write the history books, a mistake also made by President Carter), there has already been quite a change in public perception of the Soviets. Turn back the pages to the U.S.-Soviet summit in Moscow in 1972. Then there were no Jewish demonstrations, or none large enough to attract much attention. But there *were* anti-American protests. The issue of human rights in the Soviet Union was not raised at the summit. On May 26, 1972, Richard Nixon signed the SALT and ABM treaties in Moscow, thereby inaugurating the peculiar period we are still in, when Americans agreed to feel more secure by promising not to defend themselves against Soviet missiles. This treaty, which now seems so unwise, indeed perilous, was approved by the U.S. Senate less than ten weeks after it was signed with only two dissenting votes.

By contrast the pending INF treaty is small potatoes, yet it will be controversial. □

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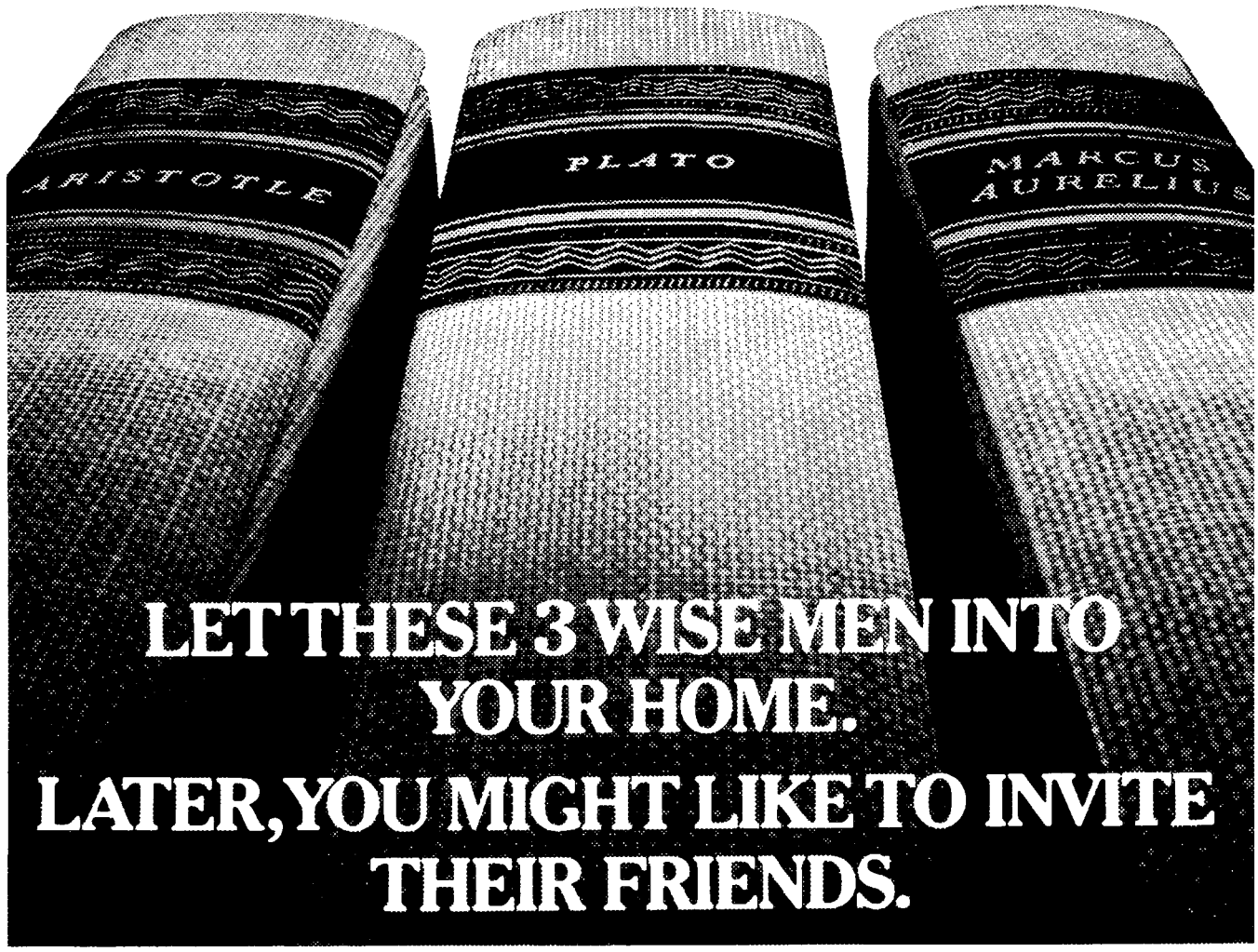

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HARRY BECK IS P.O.'D

That's right. Politically oppressed. Stripped of his rights to free speech and free association.

Forced to finance political candidates and causes he opposes.

Right here in the U.S.A.

But Harry Beck is fighting back. And winning big.

Since 1975, with the help of the National Right to Work Legal Defense Foundation, Harry Beck has battled in federal court to stop political oppression by organized labor.

Now, with his landmark case before the U.S. Supreme Court, Harry is on the verge of winning political freedom for millions of American workers.

WHERE DOES ALL THE MONEY GO?

Harry Beck worked for the phone company for more than 20 years.

For a time, he was a member of the union, the Communications Workers of America. But he resigned his membership "because the CWA was totally impersonal to anyone except those at the top."

Some of his co-workers resigned, too.

So, "those at the top" cut a deal with the phone company demanding that all employees—even workers not in the union—had to pay money to union chiefs or lose their jobs. They called it "agency fees."

Harry paid up, but he didn't like it.

Then he found out where the money goes. And that was the last straw.

Top officials of the CWA were spending Harry's money on partisan politics. Supporting candidates and causes that Harry disagreed with.

"They backed people," Harry says, "I just wouldn't have backed."

As much as 79 percent of CWA forced "agency fee" money was spent on politics and other causes that had nothing in the world to do with collective bargaining.

Union officials used the money to bankroll a political and social agenda that Harry never would have supported voluntarily.

THE LONG FIGHT FOR FREEDOM

Harry Beck and 19 others fought back. They sought help from the National Right to Work Legal Defense Foundation and, 12 years ago, brought suit challenging organized labor's unique brand of political oppression.

In 1979, the workers won.

The trial court ruled that the constitutional rights of workers like Harry are violated by the compulsory payment of dues for anything other than collective bargaining.

In 1981, the workers won again. A special master of the court found that as much as 79 percent of forced "agency fees" were spent illegally.

In 1983, the workers won again. The District Court agreed with earlier rulings and reaffirmed the constitutional rights of workers to refrain from financing causes they oppose.

Union lawyers appealed. And in 1985, the workers won again.

This time, a higher court ruled that the forced payment of fees for non-collective bargaining purposes violates the Constitution *and* federal labor law.

Union lawyers tried again. And the workers won again in 1986. This time before the full ten-judge Court of Appeals.

Now, after 12 years of litigation, more than 40 days of testimony, thousands of legal documents and five resounding victories, Harry Beck has reached the highest court in the land.

HOW MANY HARRY BECKS ARE THERE?

The potential impact of Harry's heroic struggle is enormous.

Union officials collect some $3.5 billion in compulsory dues every year.

They spend an estimated $200 million in support of political campaigns every election cycle—much of it raised through forced "agency fees."

And millions of workers like Harry Beck—compelled to pay for this political support—rarely have any voice in the selection of union-favored candidates and causes.

They pay the money or they lose their jobs.

Of course, as Harry says, "It's not the money. It's the principle. The union used my dues to cancel out my vote."

Without the expertise and funding provided by the National Right to Work Legal Defense Foundation, Harry Beck's case would not have been possible.

In more than 200 cases nationwide, the Foundation is providing free legal assistance to thousands of other workers who, like Harry, have suffered the political oppression of compulsory unionism.

If you'd like to help workers like Harry Beck, we'd like to hear from you.

National Right to Work Legal Defense Foundation

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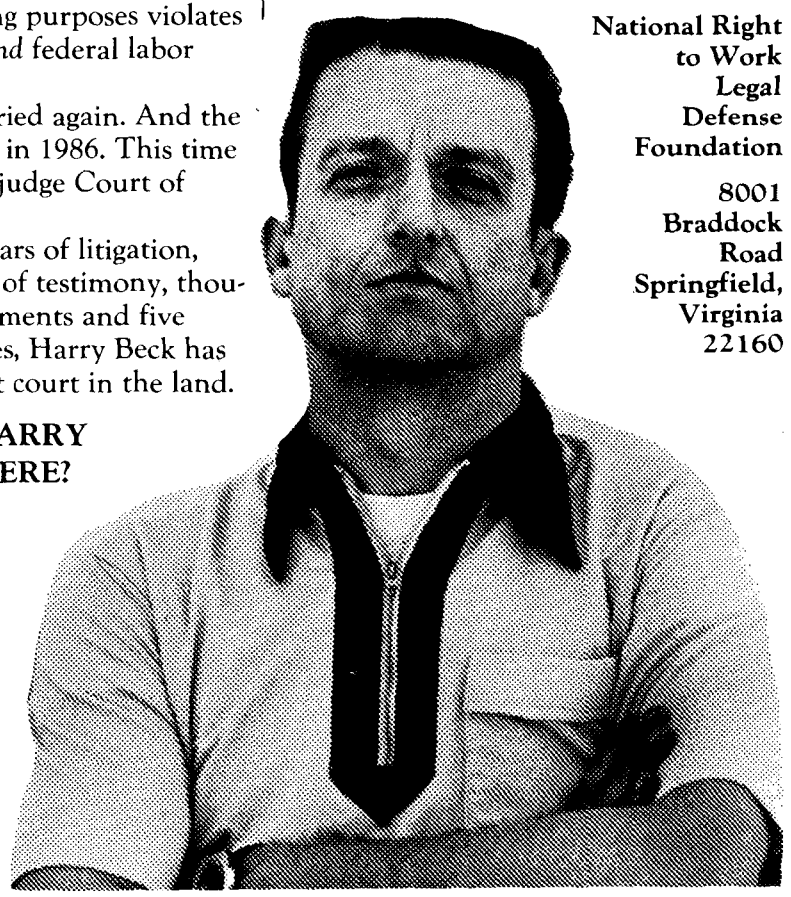

Harry Beck. *Fighting for political freedom.*

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Fred Barnes

THOU SHALT NOT COMMIT CONSERVATISM

How Nancy and Mike kept the White House safe from the right.

At a nationally televised press conference during his first term, President Reagan finished a pat answer to a question, paused a moment, then kept on talking. I forget exactly what Reagan said. But as he yakked on I remember glancing to the back of the East Room and spotting several White House aides. They had looks of sheer terror on their faces. Their worst fear was being realized, an unscripted Reagan holding forth on live TV. His set answer had been fine. They'd rehearsed that. But now Reagan was in uncharted territory. And he might candidly express his beliefs—commit conservatism, in other words.

Oddly enough, Reagan has surrounded himself in the White House with senior aides who regard his conservative views as a source of trouble, not popularity. Sure, there are always a few conservatives around. In the first term, there were Edwin Meese, who served as White House counselor and spent considerable time in the Oval Office, and Lyn Nofziger. In the second term, Patrick Buchanan was around for two years as communications chief. Now, the conservatives-in-residence are domestic advisers Gary Bauer and Kenneth Cribb. And that exhausts the list. Some of the other senior aides are effective political operatives. Certainly James Baker III was as chief of staff from 1981 to 1985. And so is Tom Griscom, the current communications czar. But they aren't conservatives, and this makes them leery of Reagan's conservatism.

What produces this strange situation, a movement conservative with a non-conservative circle of advisers? Three things do. First, there is Reagan's extraordinarily lackadaisical attitude toward personnel matters. He simply doesn't care much who works for him. After the 1980 election, Reagan intended to make Meese his chief of staff, but was easily persuaded to install Baker instead, though Baker had been the campaign manager for his only serious foe for the Republican nomination, George Bush. In 1983, he readily agreed to let Baker shift to national security adviser and have Michael K. Deaver take over as chief of staff. A press release announcing this change was written. At the last minute, Meese and William Clark, the departing national security adviser, intervened, and Reagan stopped the Baker-Deaver move as blithely as he'd initially approved it. (This was doubly bad for Deaver. He lost a good job that would have kept him from leaving the White House, becoming a lobbyist, and getting convicted on three counts of perjury. But that's another story.) In 1985, the President didn't bat an eye when Baker, still chief of staff, and Treasury Secretary Donald Regan came to him with a plan to switch jobs. Feel free, the President said.

Second, there's Nancy Reagan. She cares enormously about who advises her husband, and serious conservatives give her the willies. She's never thought much of Meese. She was also instrumental in the sackings of Richard Allen and his successor, Clark, as national security advisers, and Interior Secretary James Watt. In his new book, *Behind the Scenes*,[1] Deaver explains that Clark was obsessed with the Soviet Union. "He saw no hope in any policy that relied on trusting the Russians, argued against any attempt to improve that relationship, and did what he could to slow it down," writes Deaver. "He felt betrayed . . . when Nancy and I were able to persuade the President to tone down the 'Evil Empire' language Clark had favored. When Bill went to Nancy, and was told point-blank that I stood with her, he decided it was time to go home."

[1]Morrow, $17.95.

Third, non-conservatives—or pragmatists as they are known in Washington—love to work for Reagan. Obviously power has something to do with this. He's got power, and they relish sharing it with him. Reagan's conservatism is no impediment to them. They see him as a hot political property whose views can and should be pushed aside in favor of their own. He gives the speeches after (if all goes well) they formulate the policies. Their respect for Reagan is minimal. He's a nice man who is popular with folks, but he's untutored. They see him as an innocent who must be protected from himself and from right-wing advisers, what few there are.

Deaver is a classic of the type. He went to work for Reagan shortly after Reagan was elected governor of California in 1966 and stayed with him until 1985. Despite the long service, he fails to understand that ideological commitment is a big part of Reagan's appeal. Deaver calls himself a "conventional conservative," but you'd never know it from his advice. He urged Reagan to take a softer line toward the Soviet Union and not get too involved with the Nicaraguan contras. In his book, Deaver doesn't bother to mention the President's conservative policies, except those that he thinks went too far. And he is critical of Reagan's conservative advisers. "Reagan does not need anyone to the right of him," says Deaver.

As deputy White House chief of staff, Deaver got invited to chic parties. At one, he took a shine to Lillian Hellman, the playwright. He records disapprovingly Reagan's comment that she was an unrepentant Stalinist. He spent a whole weekend at Katharine Graham's place on Martha's Vineyard, where he met Jackie Onassis (a "flirt" and a "world-class charmer"). On top of all this, he went to dinner at the home of novelist William Styron ("a

Fred Barnes is a senior editor of the New Republic.

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compelling fellow"). He concludes that "we need more artistic people in government service. They are often eccentric, but their virtue is that, unlike generals, they want to blow up only themselves."

In contrast, Deaver gratuitously zings Pat Buchanan. He writes that it was important to keep Buchanan "the hell out" of the flap over Reagan's visit to Bitburg cemetery in Germany. He calls Buchanan "a tough, talented, outspoken wordsmith, a purist when it comes to the conservative faith, far enough to the right that he considers school lunches a subversive plot." Meese, Deaver writes, "devoted most of his public life to Ronald Reagan and never really understood his strengths and weaknesses." Besides, Meese "refused to play the Washington game, could not or would not take the press into his confidence, and would, as a matter of loyalty or conviction, sit there and deny something he knew to be true."

Deaver found a soulmate not in Ronald Reagan, but in Nancy. She and Deaver "became a team, united by our shared belief that Reagan needed to be protected, whether he wanted it or not." While Reagan has homebody tendencies, preferring to put on his pajamas early in the evening and watch TV, "Nancy is more aware of the finer things and of the subtleties of human nature." Like Deaver, she "is not uncomfortable among free spirits and intellectuals . . . she enjoys reaching out to new people of whatever political coloring." Not many people, says Deaver, "knew how close she was to the writer Truman Capote." She once arranged to have Meese get Capote out of jail in California, where he'd been arrested for disorderly conduct. Well, at least she found some use for Meese.

One of Deaver's aims in writing the book, Deaver says, was "to debunk the myths about the iron matron, in the designer gown, who orchestrated her husband's political career." Yet he goes on to describe in detail how Nancy intruded in both policy and personnel matters. "Let the record show that she acted, when she acted, only to protect the president. She does not set policy or attend Cabinet meetings or promote her own agenda." Maybe not, "but once into an issue, she was like a dog with a bone," according to Deaver. "She just didn't give up. It was Nancy who pushed everybody on the Geneva summit [in 1985]. She felt strongly that it was not only in the interest of world peace but the correct move politically. She would buttonhole George Shultz, Bud McFarlane, and others, to be sure that they were moving toward that goal."

Deaver marvels at Nancy's method. Of course, she never swings into action "unless there is a controversy around him, or he needs to be convinced that an action is unavoidable." Fortunately for her, there always seems to be a controversy. And she "knows" it wouldn't work for her to demand someone's dismissal. So, says Deaver, "she will wage a quiet campaign, planting a thought, recruiting others of us to push it along, making a case: Foreign policy will be hurt . . . our allies will be let down." She "lobbied the president" not only "to soften his line on the Soviet Union," but also to cut military spending and "not to push Star Wars at the expense of the poor and dispossessed. She favored a diplomatic solution in Nicaragua and opposed his trip to Bitburg." As luck would have it, Deaver says, "Nancy wins most of the time. When she does, it is not by wearing him down but by usually being on the right side of an issue." If you think that means the conservative side, guess again.

First, there is Reagan's extraordinarily lackadaisical attitude toward personnel matters. He simply doesn't care much who works for him.

Terrel Bell, who was Education Secretary from 1981 to 1985, is not a Nancy idolator, but he matches Deaver in his disregard for Reagan the conservative. In *The Thirteenth Man: A Reagan Cabinet Memoir*,[2] he tosses off superficial praise of the President. Reagan "knew how to delegate and when to monitor," says Bell. "He had a laid-back style, but this did not mean he was not effective. Indeed, it enabled him to be effective." But that's as far as Bell goes. He is oblivious to Reagan's political background in the conservative movement and to the circumstances that brought about his election. Bell thinks the only reason Reagan might harbor a conservative thought is that Meese or David Stockman or some other right-wing adviser put it in his head.

You can make the case that Reagan got what he deserved in Bell. When you don't give a hoot about who works for you, you wind up with people who don't give a hoot about your policies. Reagan didn't know Bell before appointing him. And, in fact, Bell was the fourth choice for the job. Meese and Reagan's transition officials first offered the education post to John Silber, the president of Boston University. He was too busy. Then they tried Hanna Gray, the president of the University of Chicago, who wasn't interested. After economist Thomas Sowell rebuffed an overture, Reagan's aides turned to Bell, who had been recommended by Richard Wirthlin, the pollster. Bell was superintendent of higher education in Utah at the time, a functionary in the education establishment. He wasn't sold on Reagan's goal of eliminating the Department of Education—he had testified publicly in favor of creating it a few years earlier—but he agreed to go along.

In Washington, Bell devoted his days to battling Meese, Stockman, and other conservatives. In his book, he recounts paranoid delusions about them. "The group was like a secret society," he says. "They looked after each other. They shared horror stories about the rest of us, and I knew they had labeled me philosophically unfit for a high-level position from the day my appointment was announced." Worse, they prevented him from filling the major positions at the Education Department with non-conservatives. Worse still, they leaked to the press that Bell wasn't getting his choices approved at the White House. "It was clear there was a deliberate movement under way to destroy my credibility."

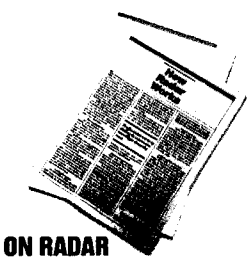
Bell congratulates himself for compromising on appointments, agreeing to bring in some conservatives in exchange for White House approval of some of his choices. "Nonetheless I was apprehensive about the ideologues I had agreed to, for I realized I was bringing potential trouble into ED," he says. To him, conservatives serving under the most conservative President in at least a half-century represented trouble. He uses all the buzzwords to tar them. They are "zealots," "extremists," "ultraconservatives," "the extreme right faction," and so on. Naturally, he felt equally hostile to the conservative themes on which Reagan has campaigned. He bitterly opposed spending cuts in education programs. After Reagan's re-election, Bell was surprised to discover that his department would not be spared further retrenchment. Reagan had betrayed him, he says. The President used the issue of educational reform to help win a second term, but still wanted to pare spending and eliminate the Education Department. Bell was thunderstruck at the thought that Reagan harbored a few conservative goals after four years in Washington. He quit.

It turns out that Reagan is as uninterested in who leaves among his advisers as he is in who shows up. Bell says he sent his resignation to the President by special courier. "I never heard a word. No one telephoned. Three days later the president announced to the press that I had resigned for personal reasons." □

[2]The Free Press, $19.95.

How many undeserved radar tickets were issued last year?

a) 1,012,317
b) 649,119
c) 0
d) No one knows



Unfortunately, the correct answer is d) No one knows. Over 10,000,000 tickets were issued last year. By some estimates, up to 30 percent of them were incorrect.

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P. J. O'Rourke

THE '60s KIDS AND THE CRASH

It's all over now, baby boom.

Ever since the stock market went to the bathroom last fall, a lot of us have been pretty busy—talking our broker pals down from window ledges and convincing friends in the junk bond business to shut off the Porsche and open the garage door. We've been so busy that we may not have noticed Black Monday, Blue Tuesday, Black and Blue Wednesday, etc. marked the end of an era. Neo-poverty means curtains for the Yuppies, a.k.a. the Me Generation, a.k.a. the Now Generation, a.k.a. the Dr. Spock Brats. Everybody born between WWII and the early sixties is finally going to have to grow up. It's all over now, Baby Boom.

Of course, the collapse of the Reagan Pig-Out wasn't the only thing that did us Boomers in. There was massive drug-taking, which turned out to be a bad idea. Maybe drugs make you a better person but only if you believe in heaven and think John Belushi could get past the doorman. And having sex with everyone we could think of—this broke up our first two marriages and gave most of us chronic venereal diseases and the rest of us obituaries. And then there was us, just being ourselves—"finding out who we are," "getting in touch with our feelings," "fulfilling our true inner potential"—frightening stuff. You'll notice that now we're all running out to see *Fatal Attraction* so we can moon over a nuclear family and cheer for traditional morals. It seems like that boring middle-class suburbia where we grew up was swell after all. The problem is, we've spent all our money on cocaine and Reeboks and we can't afford it.

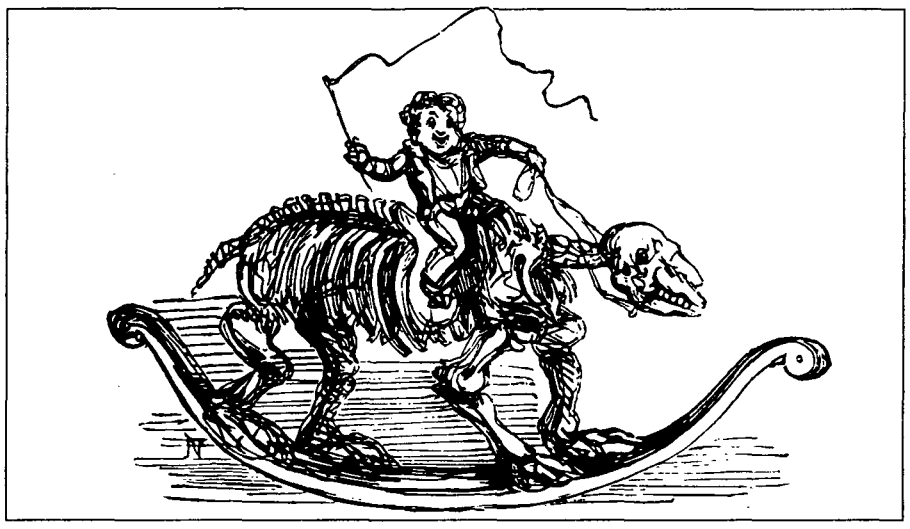
What went wrong? We were the generation of hope; the generation that was going to change the world; the biggest, richest, best-educated generation in the history of America—the biggest, richest, best-educated spot in this or any other galaxy. Nothing was too good for us. It took thousands of doctors and psychiatrists to decide whether we should suck our thumbs or all our toes, too. Our every childhood fad had global implications. One smile at Davy Crockett and the forests of the temperate zone were denuded in the search for raccoon-tail hats. When we took up Hula Hoops, the planet bobbled in its orbit. Our transistor radios drowned out the music of the spheres. A sniffle from us and *Life* magazine was sick in bed for a month. All we had to do was hold a sit-in and governments were toppled from the Peking of Mao Tse-tung to the Cleveland of Dennis Kucinich. "We are the world," we shouted just a couple of years ago. And just a couple of years ago we were. How did we wind up so old? So fat? So confused? So *broke*?

The truth is our generation was spoiled rotten from the start. We spent the entire 1950s on our butts in front of the television while mom fed us Twinkies and Ring-Dings through strawberry Flavor Straws and dad ransacked the toy stores looking for 100 mph streamlined Schwinns, Daisy air howitzers, Lionel train sets larger than the New York Central system, and other novelties to keep us amused during the few hours when Pinky Lee and "My Friend Flicka" weren't on the air.

When we came of age in the 1960s, we found the world wasn't as perfect as Mr. Greenjeans and Mrs. Cleaver said it would be, and we threw a decade-long temper tantrum. We screamed at our parents, our teachers, the police, the President, Congress, and the Pentagon. We threatened to hold our breath (as long as the reefer stayed lit) and not cut our hair until poverty, war, and injustice were stopped.

That didn't work. So we whiled away the seventies in an orgy of hedonism and self-absorption, bouncing from ashram to bedroom to disco to gym at a speed made possible only by ingesting vast quantities of Inca Scratch-N-Sniff.

Even this proved unsatisfying, so we elected President Reagan and tried our hand at naked greed. We could have it all—career, marriage, job, children, BMW, Rolex, compact disc player, another marriage, more children, and a high-growth, high-yield, no-load mutual fund. Actually, for a while, it looked like we *could* have it all. As long as we didn't mind also having a national debt the size of the Crab Nebula, an enormous underclass making its living from five-cent beverage can deposits, and currency that the Japanese use to blow their nose. But now our economy has the willi-waws, and our Youth Culture has arthritis, Alzheimer's, and gout. Life's big VISA card bill has come due at last.



The Baby Boom has reached middle age. It's time for us to pause, time to reflect, time to . . . OH, GOD, DARLING DON'T DO IT WITH A GUN—WE JUST REDECORATED THE BATHROOM!!! . . . time to evaluate the contributions that we, as a generation, have made to a world which presented us with so many unique advantages. Contributions such as . . . uh . . . um . . . BZZZZZZZZZ *Time's Up!* Well, some of the Beatles' songs are really great. (Although, technically, the Beatles aren't part of the Baby Boom.) And there's that first Tom Robbins novel, *Another Roadside Attraction*. That was good, I think. I mean I was very stoned when I read it. And . . . and . . . New Coke?

Wait a minute, I hear dissenting noises. Civil Rights, you say? But the Civil Rights Movement was founded by people a lot older than us. Harriet Tubman, for instance. We Boomers *did* start the Peace Movement. That was a big success. The Vietnam war only lasted another eight or ten years, once we got the Peace Movement going. Then, darn it, the Communists took over South Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia and killed everybody they could get their hands on just like General Westmoreland, that pig, said they would. So I don't think we can count the Peace Movement as a major contribution, especially not as far as the former citizens of Phnom Penh are concerned. Our political commitment, however, really changed things. You can tell by the quality of the Presidents that we used to have, such as Truman and Eisenhower, compared to the quality of the Presidents that we got as soon as the Baby Boom was old enough to vote, such as Carter and Reagan. And our idealism has made a difference. Ever since Live-Aid all the Ethiopians have had to do the

P. J. O'Rourke, a frequent contributor to The American Spectator, *is author of* Republican Party Reptile.

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Jane Fonda work-out to keep from larding up around the middle.

It is true that our generation was the first to take feminism seriously. That's because old-timey feminists used to worry about boring things like voting rights and legal status. But Boomer Women put some real life in the issues by emphasizing upscale grabbiness, pointless careerism, and insane arguments about pronoun antecedents. Fitness is another trend pioneered by the Boom. Millions of us are leading empty, useless, pitiful lives and lifting weights and eating fiber to make those lives last longer. Also, the computer revolution—we invented a brilliant matrix of complex and intricate software programs which allow us to compile, cross-reference, and instantly access all the nothing that we know. Finally, there's our creativity—our wild, innovative, original artistic gifts—surely a legacy to the ages. Huh? Huh? Sorry, I couldn't hear you. I had the new L. L. Cool J *Bigger and Deffer* tape turned all the way up on my Walkman.

Let's face it, our much-vaunted rebellion against bourgeois values meant we didn't want to clean the bathroom. All our mystical enlightenments are now printed in Hallmark greeting cards with pictures of unicorns on them. Our intellectual insights led to a school system that hasn't taught anybody how to read in fifteen years. All we've done for the disadvantaged is gentrify the crap out of their neighborhoods. And now we're about to lose our jobs.

Do we have any skills or anything? No. Complain, play Donkey Kong, and roll joints with E-Z Wider papers are the only things this generation has ever been able to do. Will anyone feel sorry for us? No. We've been making pests of ourselves for four decades, hogging the limelight, making everybody feel un-hip and out of it. The earth has had a belly-full of us. We'll be selling kiwi fruit on the street and rattling microchips in a tin cup and people will *laugh*.

We're the generation whose heroes were Howdy Doody, Jerry Rubin, Big Bird, and Ivan Boesky. We deserve the stock market crash, and herpes and the Betty Ford Clinic, besides. We're jerks. We're clowns. We're forty and still wearing jeans. Nobody takes us seriously . . .

Wait a minute. *Serious*. That's it. Oh, man, this will really bug the squares! What we do is we all start wearing dumpy corduroy sport coats and cheap, shiny navy-blue wash pants and Hush Puppies. We get those stupid half-glasses and wear them way down on the end of our nose. We read Schopenhauer, Wittgenstein, Kant, all those guys. We call it *The New Seriousness*. The media will wig-out. We'll be all over network TV again.

Dig this—we start going to church, not Moonie church or born-again church but real Episcopalian church, every Sunday. We invite each other over to afternoon teas and discuss the novels of Thomas Mann. We take up the cello. We do the *London Times* crossword puzzle in ink. We admire Woody Allen's *recent* movies. We vote in local elections.

We'll be *crazy* serious—international superstars of, like, heavy, pensive egg-headery. We fire David Letterman and replace him with Jean-Paul Sartre. (Is he still alive? Well, somebody like that.) Shoot MTV videos for Handel and Rimsky-Korsakov. Do a feature movie about the life of Euripides with the sound track in ancient Greek. There are 76 million of us. Everybody's going to want a books-on-tape cassette of Bertrand Russell and A. N. Whitehead's *Principia Mathematica* for their car. We'll make a fortune! We'll be famous! And we'll change the world!

The New Seriousness—it's bitchin', it's far-out, it's rad to the max, it's *us*. Gotta go now. Gotta call Merrill Lynch and buy stock in the Cleveland Symphony Orchestra. □

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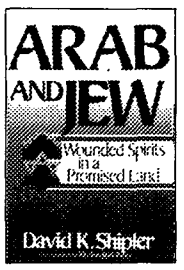

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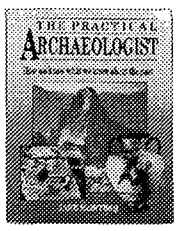

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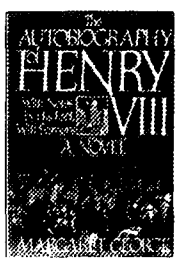

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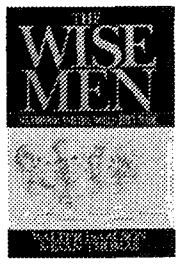

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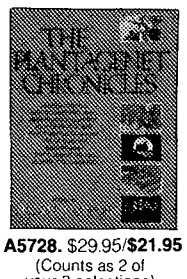

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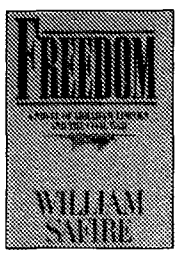

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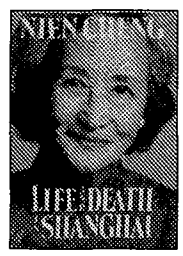

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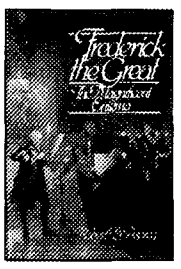

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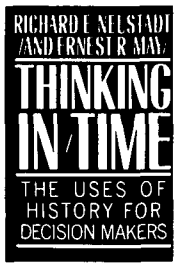

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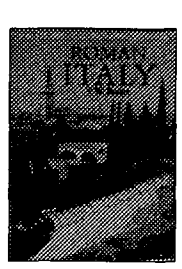

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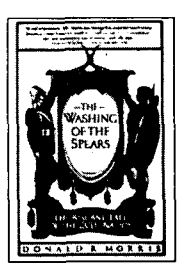

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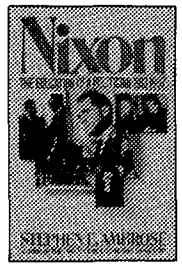

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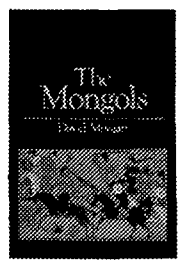

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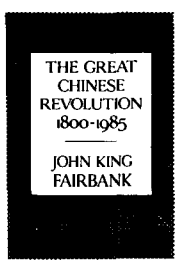

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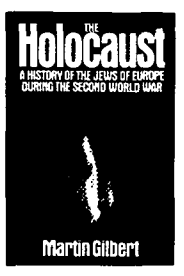

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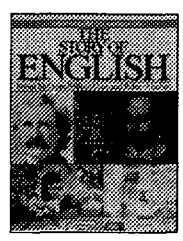

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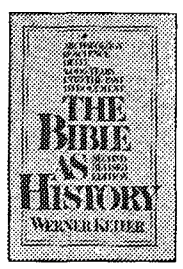

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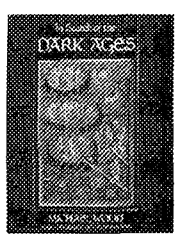

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Christopher Wood

A DEPRESSION IN OUR FUTURE?

A free-marketeer predicts it.

The game is up. We were living during a period of fast money. The press had already coined their epitaphs. Earlier in 1987 the *New York Times* ran a headline, "Feeling Poor on $600,000 a Year" over a story about young investment bankers. Too often for comfort it was true. As the 1980s rattled on, the financial fever intensified until the only scorecard that counted was the number in the bank account.

Nowhere was the fever more exaggerated than in the money business itself—the world of high, or perhaps low, finance. In Wall Street, the City of London, or Tokyo's Marunouchi financial district, the spiritual was out and toys were in. The baubles may have differed—a manor house for the City slicker, a Long Island mansion for the striving Wall Street yuppie, and golf club memberships at $2 million for the Tokyo eager beaver. But the goal was the same.

This fevered atmosphere developed for two reasons: first, the extraordinary bull market in financial assets in the 1980s, the biggest since the roaring twenties; second, the deregulation and globalization of the world's financial markets. The combination meant a once-in-a-lifetime boom for those working in the money business. Bumper bonuses were paid in the past few years as countless securities firms leveraged up, hurling themselves kamikaze-like into the looming global battle to become the world's top financial middlemen, a fight from which only a few can emerge winners. These money men have been flourishing in a climate of false prosperity. The 1980s boom in trading bits of paper, optimistically known as "securities," could not last. But because it is in the nature of markets to test extremes, financial mania could only be expected to lead to greedy excesses. Only then can there occur the inevitable sobering hangover.

This boom-bust cycle is as old as man himself. Because technology has not yet changed human nature, no thoughtful person should have expected this time around to be any different. Unfortunately many younger participants in the financial markets weren't reflective enough. Fresh out of business schools with the obligatory MBAs and clone-like demeanor, many of these fresh-faced eager-looking types have suffered a shock. There will be more traumas to follow. Because they either thought that history is irrelevant, or that somehow "this time it is different," they are destined to repeat the same mistakes as their forefathers.

Until October 1987 the prophets of doom had been discredited. Their warnings of an impending debacle had gone unfulfilled and everyone had continued to make merry and make money. Among Wall Street's investor cognoscenti, however, there was general tacit agreement that the party was drawing to a close. The debate was less about whether the revels would end than when. Was it 2 a.m. or 4 a.m. or still only midnight?

Dawn broke on October 19 when the Dow Jones industrial average collapsed 508 points to 1,738.74: a 22.6 percent decline in a single day. This was truly the stuff of history. It dwarfs the much written about 12.8 percent fall on Black Tuesday of October 1929. It also followed days of falling shareprices. From its peak in August, the Dow had plunged a breathtaking 36 percent.

The sheer scale and speed of the crash clearly made nonsense of yesterday's conventional wisdom that 1929 "could never happen again." This did not stop the Washington and Wall Street establishments from immediately proclaiming that unlike 1929 the crash would not lead to a depression because of "safeguards" in the system. Do not believe them. They will be as wrong about that as they were about the impossibility of a repeat of the 1929 crash. Rather the reverse is likely. Because the stock market crash in late 1987 was twice as bad in percentage terms as 1929, the subsequent depression promises to be twice as bad, too.

Those who argue to the contrary claim that governments can now stop depression by printing lots of money and spending lots of it. Conservatives should be wary of such pat answers, which imply a touching faith in bureaucrats. When the establishment speaks about safeguards, it is really talking about panaceas such as government deposit insurance for the banking and thrift industries. This is of course only good-times insurance. As gold bug Ted Slanker put it in his newsletter: "When the whole economic system fails, how can the government, made up of the people and systems that are in trouble, save the system and the people?"

The only action it can take *in extremis* is to bail out the problem by printing dollars, which is just what keeps happening, be it the multi-billion dollar bail out of Chicago's Continental Illinois in 1984, or the (very temporary) bail out of the insolvent Federal Savings and Loans Deposit Insurance Corporation in 1987. This bailout mentality is neither financially responsible nor politically courageous. Any fool can print money. The tough response is to say no to special interest groups.

Otherwise, the result is a continuous debauching of the currency. The outcome one day will be a run on the Federal Reserve itself when foreigners finally lose all faith in the value of the greenback as a hard currency. That will mark the end of the dollar as the world's reserve currency, and with it the end of America's heady luxury of being able to borrow the money its government prints, and also the end of Pax Americana. Skeptics should note that right now some 50 percent of the deposits in the American banking system are held by foreigners. That is why during the Continental Illinois episode the Fed bailed out not only depositors up to $100,000, as deposit insurance requires, but all depositors even if they lived in Switzerland. The Chicago bank was effectively nationalized.

In fact the main contrast between 1929 and now is not that conditions are better but rather that they are worse. This time America has huge budget and trade deficits, its major banks are saddled with unpayable Third World debts, and the world's financial markets are electronically integrated, creating perfect conditions for a chain reaction. And as we saw in October, global greed begets global panic. Following Wall Street down, Tokyo fell 15 percent in one day and London 22 percent in two days. Hong Kong resorted to shutting its market. When it reopened a week later, the result was a one-day 35 percent plunge. The lesson: never try to cheat the market.

Obviously, those who say a depression is coming neither expect nor want to be believed. For if most market participants thought another depression was at hand, then the price of bonds, shares, and property would already have collapsed way below current levels. The prophecy would have become self-fulfilling. It would be too late to sell.

In fact the main concern of most investors right up till the October crash was a return to higher inflation. Indeed these worries—not, as the press reported, the budget or trade deficit—were the main reason for the crash. Exaggerated inflationary concerns bid up interest rates in the bond market until Treasury bonds were yielding nearly 10.5 percent. It was this rise in interest rates which broke the back of the bull market in stocks. As soon as stocks

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crashed bonds soared and interest rates plunged as the market discounted recession ahead and investors fled to quality.

So right up to the end of the bull market, bond investors continued to fret about yesterday's problem—double digit inflation—when the world during the 1980s has been sliding in the exactly opposite direction, namely deflation. Now, despite the warning of the October crash, many continue to believe in the ability of governments to head off depression when all the signs point to the disintegration of any significant economic cooperation between the major economic powers, America, West Germany, and Japan, and its gradual replacement by dog-eat-dog protectionist economic warfare. In trying to put pressure on the Germans by talking down the dollar, Treasury Secretary James Baker has made this clear. The name of his game is obvious to foreigners. It is called competitive devaluation and is simply another version of Smoot-Hawley. The outcome might have short-term benefits for America's exporters, but in the longer term it is a dangerous gamble. It is betting the integrity of the dollar, which is still the world's reserve currency as witnessed by the willingness of foreign central bankers to hold it. For how long?

Deflation means falling prices, a contraction of bank lending and so of the money supply, and a resulting slump in economic activity. When it sets in, the Fed can print all the money it likes but will find itself "pushing on a string." For the money supply can only expand when borrowers want to borrow and lenders want to lend. In a deflation this will not happen, which is why money supply will contract as debts are liquidated, just as it did in the 1930s despite the best efforts of the central bankers and their printing presses.

The capitalist world last experienced deflation during the Great Depression. It is just the sort of financial excesses seen during the 1980s which historically, as in the 1920s, have been a harbinger of deflation. Most important is the accumulation of debt and its subsequent liquidation when borrowers default and capital is written off and so wealth destroyed. This is what began to happen in October when $1 trillion was wiped out of the stock market.

That too much debt is dangerous for an individual, a company, or a country should be obvious. Yet during the Reagan years some conservatives (many of them former socialists, hungry for ideological fixes) have distorted their creed by seeking to argue that America's debt addiction did not matter because the economy could somehow grow its way out of it. This mentality stemmed from a laudable desire to cut income taxes, but it forgot the other side of the equation, namely cutting spending. Unfortunately it is sheer bunk. The only result was Keynesian-style deficit financing. The crude supply-side view has never been accepted by the European right, be it British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher or those advocates of sound money such as the Swiss and German banking establishments. Interviewed a few months before the crash during a visit to New York, the chairman of Switzerland's largest bank, the Union Bank of Switzerland, said: "The rest of the world sells its products to America and lends America the money to pay for them. This is a game which cannot go on forever. Nobody can be indebted forever. No person, no country, no government. No one." It is this kind of thinking which explains why the Bundesbank is so reluctant to do Washington's bidding. Europeans simply do not share Americans' perennial optimism. It is a question of culture not politics.

Keynesians talk about "demand," monetarists about the money supply, and supply-siders about cutting taxes. Where are the economists writing about the consequences of debt?

In 1936, near the trough of the Great Depression, Freeman Tilden, an obscure American novelist, wrote a remarkable book called *A World in Debt*. Today it makes more compelling reading than a pile of commentaries from professional economists. Indeed Tilden wrote the book because he could find nothing in the writings of contemporary economists about debt. The same is true today. Keynesians talk about "demand," monetarists about the money supply, and supply-siders about cutting taxes. Where are the economists writing about the consequences of debt? Tilden was less reticent. He wrote: "There is one cause, and only one cause, of all panics and depression in the economic world. That cause is debt. Credit is debt."

Many modern economists would like to dismiss this way of thinking as "nineteenth century"—a harkback to John Stuart Mill and kindred souls. By that they mean a mentality which assumes that debt must be paid off whereas in the glorious twentieth century, as one of their number put it to this writer, "rolling debt gathers no loss." This is nonsense.

Economics is not science but a best-guess art of studying how human beings squabble over available resources. Debt, however, as any housewife knows, is debt. When people finally lose faith in the banking system and the debt pyramid, as they lost faith in the stock market in October, there will be a worldwide scramble for cash. Debts will be called in, borrowers will default, and liquidity will contract. Depression or slump, call it what you will, will have arrived.

So the 1980s bull market in stocks and bonds was a speculative bubble which disguised the underlying deflationary forces ravaging the world. It has been called financial asset inflation, a perverse deviant of the 1970s phenomenon. What caused it? The easy answer is liquidity. In the 1970s booming commodity prices encouraged a tremendous flurry of production. In the 1980s much of this relatively new capacity became uneconomic, be it oil wells, steel mills, or aluminum smelters. The result was supply gluts everywhere. The world had too much of everything, which is deflationary. Oil was perhaps the most dramatic example of supply and demand at work; of shortage turning into excess. But many other commodities and industries were similarly affected—from sugar to tin, to steel to ships, to semiconductors to farmland. Compounding the pain for producers, technology made the use of raw materials many times more efficient.

To investors this world of glut had one key message: that there were few attractive areas in which to invest spare cash in new productive capacity. As a result liquidity piled up on the sidelines.

Money was encouraged to stay idle because of the high real interest rates on offer. Whereas during the 1970s savers who left their money in the bank saw the value of their capital eroded, in the 1980s they have earned a return comfortably above the falling inflation rate (even if it did not quite match the gains in the Dow Jones index).

Industrialists drew the same conclusions as investors. With their industries suffering from excess manufacturing capacity, businessmen increasingly realized it made more sense to invest their spare or borrowed cash buying financial assets. The result was companies either buying back their own shares or the shares of other companies, hence takeover fever. Some companies in Japan even borrowed money to speculate in the Tokyo stock market to prop up sagging export earnings. The rationale was the same in all cases. Financial assets promised a superior return to the business of producing goods and selling them.

This swamp of liquidity led to today's financial scourge, nowhere more so than in America. That is the accumulation of debt. With gluts everywhere central banks had to keep printing money to keep the economy growing. Contrary to orthodox monetarist theories, this was not inflationary because of the prevailing overcapacity. Goods do not go up in price if there are too many of them around, however much money is being printed.

Instead the growth of money and credit led to financial asset inflation and a piling up of debt. The growth in outstanding obligations, whether personal, corporate, or governmental, has been called the "debt time bomb." With good reason. Debt is growing much faster in America's economy than money is being made. In the past three years debt increased more than three times as fast as profits.

This trend is unsustainable. Either debt slows through liquidation of existing debts because borrowers cannot pay or profits must increase massively to pay off the debt. As the stock market has indicated, the odds massively favor deflation and liquidation. The process will take time. But the longer the debt is allowed to accumulate through political fixing the worse the eventual liquidation and so the longer the subsequent depression. This is why the quickest and most efficient way of solving America's trade deficit, if not its budget deficit, would be a recession now. And that is clearly politically unacceptable. As for those supply-siders who contend that trade deficits are meaningless, this would be true only if the world had one currency and one government. We are not there yet.

By crashing in October the stock-market has flashed its warning. All world stock markets, save Tokyo's, crashed convincingly with Wall Street. This makes sense. In a slump the rest of the world will be effectively deprived of its main export market, the U.S. That is why in 1988, when the pressure of today's higher yen and weaker dollar finally become unbearable for Japan's export industry, Tokyo will follow Wall Street and stage an even more spectacular crash in its wildly inflated share and property markets, just as in 1929 Wall Street's followed eight months later and was more spectacular than London's. Indeed the U.S. should be spared the worst of the subsequent

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depression since as a large continental economy (especially if Canada and Mexico are included in a trade zone) it could weather a protectionist climate far better than the Asian and Western European economies which are so dependent on exporting to America. That should also mean a temporary rebound in the dollar.

Such comforts are relative. For as the world's biggest debtor, America will suffer a corresponding loss of political power when the dollar forfeits its role as the capitalist world's reserve currency. Economists calculate that at its current rate of borrowing America is likely to have an external debt of $1 trillion by the early 1990s, compared with an external investment surplus of $200 billion in 1982, which will have to be financed by willing foreigners. That amazingly swift turnaround looks increasingly analogous to the rise of America as the world's dominant power and the eclipse of Britain, a development which was complete by 1945. The only difference is that this time the transition occurred much faster and Britain's wealth was dissipated fighting Hitler, not consuming.

These are the largest of matters. In the meantime the financial markets will have to work their merry course. The stock market will doubtless rally, drawing suckers in before sliding remorselessly down as it did from 1930 on. But the real future disaster and future shock will be in the debt markets. There the damage will be worse than in stocks. Many bonds issued in the leverage-happy 1980s will default. The debt is global, oppressive, and unpayable—which is why we face the gloomy prospect of a deep and protracted depression. The challenge for conservatives will be to preserve some semblance of market capitalism during this traumatic period. It will not be easy. □

Robert D. Novak

THE ENIGMA OF BOB DOLE

On the hustings they think he's conservative. Why?

While fielding mostly routine questions during a call-in program at Station WHO in Des Moines, Sen. Robert Dole was pulled up short by a woman asking him about abortion. Why had he never taken a "leading role" against abortion? Was it possible he was not really "pro-life"?

Dole responded that if she were to check the views of his anti-abortion opponents for the Republican presidential nomination, "I think you'll find it's the same as mine." But he did not leave it at that. "I don't want to lose people who say I went too far in behalf of the unborn," he said. He then noted that in addition to protecting the unborn there is need for "pre-natal care" and for "what we ought to be doing" for "abused and battered children."

It was close to the response of the archetypal pro-choice senator, using the Teddy Kennedy defense of asserting his philosophical opposition to abortion and then rationalizing his practical deviation from those beliefs by describing other forms of "pro-life" activity. But Dole is no Teddy Kennedy who need explain away a deviation. On the contrary, his anti-abortion voting record has few flaws. Writing in the *Human Life Review* in 1986, he declared that pro-lifers "have lifted the banner of life and with it, the consciousness of all who love liberty." What he might have added is that he owes his last twelve years in public life to them.

Running for a second term in 1974, Dole encountered his only close call in seeking public office from Kansas. His opponent was an attractive and aggressive Democratic physician from Topeka named William Roy. This was the Watergate year of terror for Republicans, and Dole, as his party's recently deposed national chairman (in favor of George Bush), was portrayed as the essence of Nixonian excess. But Dr. Roy had performed abortions ("I never performed one," Dole would tell audiences), and the Senator had an army of pro-lifers harassing his opponent and running skull-and-crossbones advertisements against him.

Since then, Dole has only infrequently wavered in loyalty to the pro-life movement, but as the radio caller suggested, he has not articulated those beliefs with the intensity of a Jack Kemp or a Pat Robertson. There is a sense that his relationship to the anti-abortionists is essentially political rather than philosophical, in repayment for past services.

That relationship is further complicated by the 1974 campaign's strident tone, a familiar characteristic of Dole's political career that he has intermittently sought to eliminate. Just two years later, in 1976, when to his great surprise he became the Republican nominee for Vice President, he assured all that he would not raise abortion as an issue. In the Senate in the 1970s, he cast a vote or two against pro-life initiatives, though his voting on the flood of proposals in the 1980s is overwhelmingly anti-abortion.

His answer to the WHO caller—in a state crucial to his chances and where the pro-lifers are avidly sought by the Republican candidates—is remarkable in its concern for not frightening away other voters. His mention of "pre-natal care" is noteworthy when put in the context of a current mini-controversy, typical of the kind that has marked the Senator's political career.

A month earlier, a less than flattering portrait of Dole in the *New York Times Magazine* by Martin Tolchin and Jeff Gerth began with an anecdote illustrating his backroom techniques. In the midst of his deficit-reduction drive and public calls for control of burgeoning government health programs, he is described as giving a whispered green light to the powerful liberal Democrat, Rep. Henry Waxman, for expansion of Medicaid's pre-natal care (which then quietly passed). Waxman wrote the magazine denying the conversation

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took place. Tolchin, a highly respected veteran reporter, responded that Waxman was his source.

If Ronald Reagan, with his fervent pro-life rhetoric, flinched from a decisive stand against abortion, could as much be expected from Bob Dole? Or, at least, would the pro-lifers find him preferable to Vice President Bush, who as recently as 1980 was taking pro-choice positions and counts stalwarts of the Planned Parenthood Federation among his friends and supporters?

The abortion question reflects the Dole dilemma faced by conservatives on a broader range of issues. If their choice boils down to Bush and Dole, who would be preferable? That choice is not made any easier by either looking at Dole's career or examining his present posture.

Dole has always considered himself a conservative, and he was universally considered as such when he burst on the national scene in 1970, defiantly supportive of President Nixon. A *Washington Star* profile of him by Loye Miller described the freshman Senator as a "militant conservative." But even then, his conservatism was grounded more in political tactics than philosophy. In explaining to Miller his advocacy of Nixon, he said: "I got tired of hearing people like Muskie and McGovern getting up and browbeating the President about Vietnam. I thought we Republicans ought to keep reminding them every day that the war was already there when Nixon was elected."

By the 1974 Senate campaign, Dole was edging toward the left, allying himself with Sen. George McGovern on foodstamps. If his 1976 campaign is best remembered for his ill-advised assault on Democrats as the war party in the vice presidential debate with Walter Mondale, he also raised left-populist themes: "I don't see anybody out there carrying signs about [Medicare and Medicaid] abuse because many of the abusers are upper and middle income people, doctors and others. Now, it's easy to pick on the poor people in this country, but sometimes we find it hard to do much else."

Such rhetoric by the late seventies drew agreement from McGovern, Robert Strauss, and the *Washington Post* that Dole had "grown." The consensus today on the left is that, while in quest of the Republican nomination, he has "shrunk." The upward surge in conservative ratings of his Senate votes is punctuated by Common Cause, which used to sing the "Dole has grown" chorus. Now the liberal lobby group organizes harassment of him on the campaign circuit for fighting its campaign reform bill.

Nothing is quite so simple with Dole as a simple return to conservatism, as reflected by his personnel problems on his presidential campaign staff. After the 1984 election, he hired as personal consultants two fully accredited warriors in the conservative movement: David Keene, current chairman of the American Conservative Union, and Donald Devine, former head of the Office of Personnel Management. But simultaneously, Dole wanted the tactical insights of John Sears, who is an anathema to movement conservatives generally and to Dave Keene in particular.

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When Keene and Devine made clear they could not work with Sears, Dole brought in his fellow Kansan and best man at his second wedding, Robert Ellsworth, as a non-ideological campaign chairman with the mission of fitting everybody in. Ellsworth never was able to consolidate Sears into the operation and had his own problems with Keene.

A thoughtful student of international affairs, Ellsworth was ill suited to run a national campaign and in October was replaced as operating head of the campaign by William Brock, a former Republican national chairman who resigned as Secretary of Labor to join Dole. But Brock is a pragmatist not fully trusted by movement conservatives. While Devine has been integrated into the new organization, Keene remains as a personal political adviser to the Senator. "I think Bob just thinks the way to do it is put all these people in a box, mix them up, and let them work out their own problems," says a friend.

Devine and Keene are more than gestures to the right. For well over a year, they have advised Dole that his opportunity in the Republican party is with the conservative majority, that the moderates are irrevocably committed to Bush. Their impact has not been decisive. Dole never has been a controllable candidate, and at age 64 is not about to transform himself. Shortly after the NBC debate in early December in which he vigorously avoided taking positions, I followed the Senator on a long day in crucial Iowa. Here, too, he avoided hard positions or even the language of the right.

I heard no imitation of Reaganite rhetoric about suppressing Communism or supporting free markets. Nor did he unleash any such verbal blasts during a private conversation. Given a chance to comment on the performance of two favorite targets of the right, Dole called Secretary of State George Shultz's "generally pretty good" and Chief-of-Staff Howard Baker's "pretty good."

As the Senate leader whose style most closely resembles Lyndon Johnson's, he follows the LBJ injunction of keeping his options open as late as possible on tricky issues. Alone among the presidential candidates, he had little to say substantively on the INF treaty. Typically, his position was procedural: that as Republican floor leader, he could not join Bush in ready advocacy of the treaty but had to stay flexible.

His non-advocacy reached a peak of sorts when the select congressional committees issued their report on the Iran-contra affair. He may never reveal whether he agrees with the majority Democratic report (joined by three Republican senators) slashing Reagan or the minority Republican report upbraiding the Democrats. For good reason. One of the Republican signers of the majority report was Sen. Warren Rudman, Dole's most important supporter in New Hampshire.

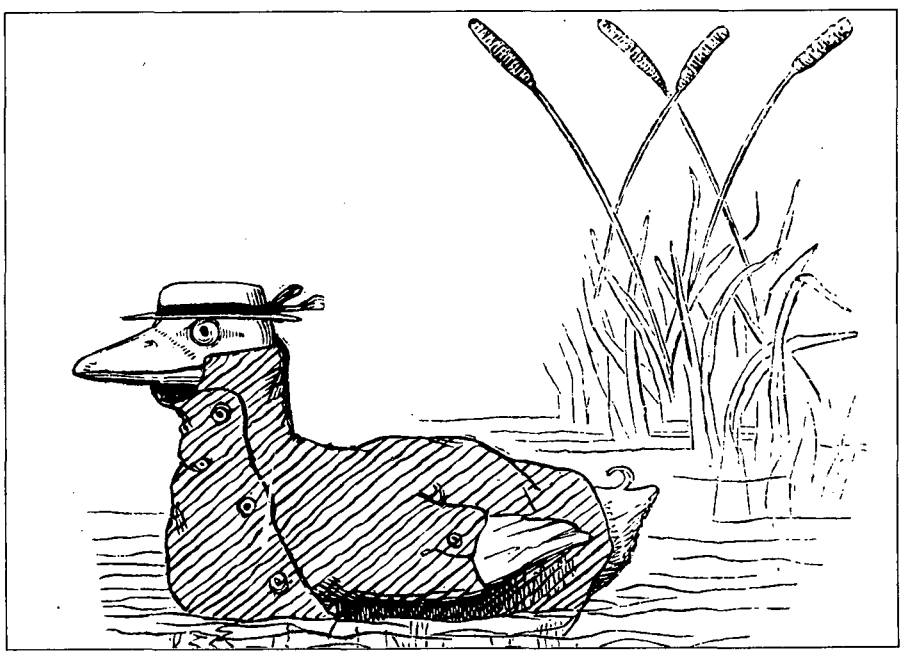
The degree to which the presidential campaign affects his policy decisions seems pervasive. He very nearly turned against the recently agreed upon deficit-reduction package when he heard that Bush was putting out a campaign mailing that attacked Dole as a taxer. The Senator called Treasury Secretary James Baker, Bush's friend and former campaign manager, telling him to forget about Dole's support for the budget package if the mailing went out. It didn't.

For nearly a year, Dole as Republican leader held up the President's nomination of foreign service officer Melissa Wells to Mozambique. He was acting at the request of Sen. Jesse Helms, who saw Wells as a symbol of the State Department's hostility to the RENAMO guerrillas fighting the Communist government of famine-ravaged Mozambique. Shortly after Helms's political organization, the Congressional Club of North Carolina, endorsed Kemp for President (though Helms himself did not), Dole released the Wells nomination.

Dole denies the two events are connected. "All we were trying to do," he told me, "was get the State Department to talk to the RENAMO representative in Washington." When they finally agreed, the nomination had to go forward. But what is Dole's position on Mozambique? Who should the U.S. support, the government or the rebels?

After a long silence, Dole responded: "All I've said on that issue is that we ought to use every distribution source we can to get food to the people. That's how I got into it, on the side of RENAMO. If they've got a network that will help people who are starving, we ought to use it. I haven't gotten into all the politics with South Africa and all that." He then related how Margaret Thatcher had briefed senators in support of the Mozambique government. "I think there's some reason for that," he said, adding: "I don't know."

But in 1976, Dole voted against an amendment cutting off U.S. aid to Communist Mozambique. From the late 1970s through as recently as 1985, Dole's voting record on foreign policy



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questions was mixed. He has cast votes against early deployment of the Strategic Defense Initiative, against imposing sanctions on the African National Congress, for invoking the War Powers Act after the invasion of Grenada, and—in 1983 and 1984—with the arms control bloc on a series of votes that found him opposing the conservatives.

With Dole's election after the 1984 election as Republican floor leader, his positions on arms control votes changed as he began collaborating with right-wing senators. "I listen a lot to [Sen.] Malcolm Wallop [a leading hardliner on arms control]," he told me.

In neither private conversation nor public speeches does Dole convey deep commitment to any of these issues, with one exception: the budget deficit as America's paramount problem. "Everything else is going along fine," he told Iowa audiences. He and his staff are convinced that here is the burning issue for America. Don Devine long has argued that conservative Republican voters agree and never would go along with Kemp's minimizing of the deficit. But from stressing the deficit, it is not a far step toward preaching austerity, sacrifice, and higher taxes.

On November 9, the day of Dole's formal announcement for President, a profile of him written by Sidney Blumenthal appeared in the *Washington Post*'s Style section in which Dole called Mondale "courageous" for his self-destructive 1984 campaign advocacy of higher taxes. "I think Mondale always had a point," he said.

"As I travel around the country," Dole told Blumenthal, "people are willing to take the bitter medicine, but nobody wants to hold the spoon." Then he asked: "Are we going to sacrifice for our children or are they going to sacrifice for us?" Campaigning through Iowa that inaugural week for his campaign, he played on that theme: "The American people are ready for bitter medicine. The credit card is due."

In Washington, his new campaign organization headed by Brock was appalled. He must stop talking about "bitter medicine." "Sacrifice" was a forbidden word. He must make clear that by "belt-tightening," he meant the government, not the people. He should promise not to tamper with rates set by the 1986 tax reform.

By November 20, when he taped the Evans and Novak program on CNN, the tone was different: "Now, I may have said 'bitter medicine.' It really shouldn't be that bad. We're not talking about Draconian measures. We're talking about tightening our belt, the government tightening up its belt."

When I later traveled with Dole through Iowa, he tried following this same course and usually managed it in his basic campaign speech. But not always. In the one set speech of the day before a Des Moines meeting of the state's electric cooperatives, Dole succumbed to the habit of a political lifetime and refused to read the text. His impromptu remarks violated his anti-austerity restraint: "We have to tighten our belts a little. We need medicine, and somebody has to hold the spoon."

He was still at it in the next stop at Sioux City, saying, "We're going to have to sacrifice a little." But realizing he was uttering the S-word, he quickly pulled back: "I'm not preaching austerity . . . [but] we've got to take some medicine." While he now pledges no raise in tax rates ("I don't find many Americans who think they're undertaxed"), he endorsed an oil import fee conditional on rebates to New England.

"Now, it's easy to pick on the poor people in this country, but sometimes we find it hard to do much else."

The overweening gloom about deep problems faced by America that in 1984 and 1985 was turning off political audiences has given way on the presidential trail to something a little closer to Reagan's Morning in America. But sometimes the darkness peeps through, as in calling the U.S. "a debtor nation" (at one stop, he caught himself and added, "at least we've got a big debt").

Dole always has been more of a taxer than a tax-cutter. Like most conservative Republicans, he voted against the Kennedy-Johnson tax cut as a second-term House member in 1964. On the day after Reagan's landslide victory in 1980, which suddenly made Dole chairman of the tax-writing Senate Finance Committee, he warned that the three-year tax cut the President-elect had promised the voters might "feed inflation." Instead, he suggested that a much smaller, one-year cut sponsored by the Democrats should be passed by the lame-duck Congress before Reagan was inaugurated.

That idea was stillborn, and Dole as Finance chairman was impressed into winning enactment of the three-year bill. He was effective, but whether his heart was in it is doubtful, to judge from his often repeated joke: the good news, a bus full of supply-siders went off the cliff; the bad news, three seats were empty.

Two years after its passage, he called cutting taxes without accompanying spending cuts "the highest folly." Sidney Blumenthal quotes him as saying that supply-side economics was "something I've never understood" and that "it's had its chance to work and failed." But in our CNN interview, he said of the 1981 tax cut: "I think it's worked."

Apart from supply-side economics, Dole's ideological self-conception is confusing. He has told one interviewer after another that the Republican party "must be more sensitive to the so-called vulnerable groups." To Blumenthal, he said: "The professional right-wingers are not for me. [They] don't want the party to grow, and so they kept out the blacks and those kind of folks."

But pressed during the CNN show to identify the "professional right-wingers," he named only fund-raiser Richard Viguerie: "He's not going to be for Bob Dole. He's already got some kind of contract with Kemp, where he sends out mail. So, he's a Kemp fan. So, you've got to understand where those people are coming from." But he went on to assert that "the conservatives are going to be for Bob Dole. The conservatives are going to look at my record and say, 'That's my candidate.' "

Dole's comments to Blumenthal seem out of line with the image he is trying to convey in Republican presidential politics. To his enemies on the right, that betrays his inner liberalism. But those who know him well regard this as nonsense. "Dole was just trying to please Blumenthal," an aide told us. With his roots on the left, Blumenthal has devised the theory that supply-siders and neoconservatives are the despair of the nation and orthodox mainline Republicans the hope. Dole was doing his best to fit the pattern.

In truth, Dole must be seen as essentially innocent of ideology and fiercely combative toward his opponent. His relative benevolence of late toward Kemp and his fierce hostility toward Bush can be explained by Kemp's decline and his prospective showdown with the Vice President.

After Robert Bork was defeated for confirmation to the Supreme Court, Dole publicly complained about Bush's absence: "In the critical days, he was in Europe getting his picture taken. Not with Bork. I think Judge Bork knows who was on the firing line." In our CNN interview, he said of Bush's chances in November: "I think he would lose." Does he harbor animosity toward the Vice President, I asked him in airborne conversation over Iowa, expecting a quick denial. "I really don't know George Bush," he replied.

He then recalled President Nixon's decision to replace Dole as Republican national chairman with Bush in the Watergate year of 1973. For a proud man, that long-ago event still rankles when he tells of going to see Bush at the United Nations, where Bush was ambassador, to offer him his own job, which he really did not want to leave.

"I remember," Dole recalled, "Nixon saying, 'We've got to find a place for him [Bush]. He wants to be number one somewhere.' And the only thing open was my job. I said [to Nixon], 'I want to stay around and have a little fun in this job.' But I went up to visit George. I always thought he probably had the call before I got there."

Actually, Dole tries not to jab Bush publicly, saying he is taking advice to be nice—"for a while" at least. Staffers, reporters, and even senators who have been at the end of Dole's barbs know what a strain it must be for him to avoid displays of temper amid the annoyances of the campaign circuit. He resists the impulse to trade insults with heckling questioners in the audience, but occasionally succumbs. When a young Democratic farmer at LeMars, Iowa, challenged him on farm policy and then Nicaragua, Dole snapped back: "You're right about everything, aren't you?"

But Dole for the most part keeps cool and is trying to give Brock and his team a free hand in running the campaign. It seems to be working. If inside-the-Beltway right-wing activists ponder whether President Bush would give away more to the Soviets through weakness than President Dole would through deviousness, Republicans who come to hear him on the stump perceive him as a true conservative.

Dole, darling of the Washington lobbies who proposes to solve the deficit problem through appointment of an elitist commission, is selling himself as a populist—and the Republican voters are buying. In a field where three candidates (including Bush) are sons of U.S. senators, Dole tells of his non-political family—his grandparents on welfare, his father going to work in overalls every day, he the only family member to go to college.

There is an unintended hint of Jimmy Carter when he promises: "I'll tell you the truth, and I'll try to remember where I'm from." He is from middle-class rural roots in Kansas. Where he comes from on the issues—what he really would do about taxes, abortion, SDI, Mozambique—remains a mystery, unlikely to be solved until he enters the Oval Office. □

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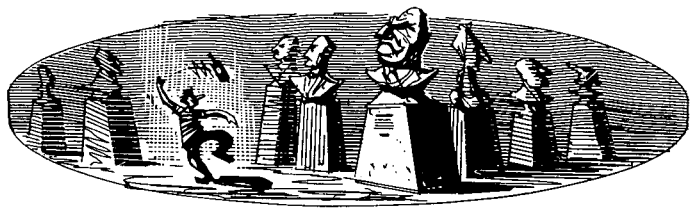


THE LAST OF THE RED-HOT POPULISTS

by Victor Gold

James Elisha Folsom, 79, the liquor-guzzling former Alabama governor whose racial moderation in the 1940s and 1950s brought calls for impeachment from segregationists . . . died yesterday at his home in Cullman, Ala.

—Washington Post
November 22, 1987

After the funeral the out-of-town contingent headed for the Holiday Inn for the standard *buffet d'hôtel*—fried chicken, greens, black-eyed peas, corn bread—along with one last round of Big Jim stories.

Chuck Morgan, a law student when Folsom was governor, opened it up. "I remember his Oklahoma City speech in 1955," he began.

"Fifty-six," someone said.

"No, '55," insisted Morgan. "The Young Democrat convention where the poli sci student wanted to show whether we had a merit system in Alabama government, and Big Jim told him, 'Sure we do. It just so happens all my friends got merit and none of my enemies do.'"

The crowd seated around the table laughed, as if they hadn't heard the story before. It was a golden oldie, like the stories about Big Jim and Ave Harriman, and Big Jim in the Birmingham jail, and all the others repeated in the next two hours. But nobody objected to hearing them again, because they were part of the legend, and on that of all days it seemed important to preserve the legend.

Given the way he lived, the wonder was that Big Jim Folsom survived into his late seventies. By the time he died—legally blind, virtually deaf, his huge body ravaged by years of heavy-duty drinking—most Alabamians had forgotten the governor who called himself the Little Man's Big Friend. There were those over the age of 45 who looked up from their morning papers and said, "Folsom died? Good God, I didn't know he was still *alive*!"; while the baby-boomers who grew up in Alabama knowing no governor but George Wallace were left to wonder what all the front-page noise was about.

Sic transit legends unlucky enough to outlive their aura. Now "Bear" Bryant—*there* was an Alabama legend who knew how to make the grand exit. One month after "Bear" retired from coaching, with the public memory of his exploits still vivid, he had a massive heart attack. The funeral procession, traveling from Tuscaloosa to Birmingham, was the longest in the state's history.

Not that the length of Big Jim's cortege wasn't respectable. But a lot of folks who should have been there had other things to do. For example, only two blacks came to the funeral of the governor who had stood up to the Segs when the KKK and White Citizens Councils were still politically potent. Only two, and neither one a member of Alabama's new black political establishment. Nary a black mayor or sheriff or legislator showed up. (What, after all, had he done for them lately?)

Thirty years ago, when Big Jim Folsom was sending the white political establishment into apoplectic spasms by inviting Harlem Congressman Adam Clayton Powell to the governor's mansion for drinks, half the dialogue in the state capital at Montgomery began with the question, "Have you heard his latest?" Or, in the case of his de-merited political enemies, "*Folsom's* latest," the very utterance of the name larded with a regional contempt usually reserved for out-of-state trouble-makers and losing football coaches.

The group gathered at the Holiday Inn remembered all of Big Jim's enemies from the past: the Segs, who called him a "nigger lover"; the business establishment, fearful of his rabble-rousing ways; and the "proper folk" appalled by his rustic way of operating affairs of state—Good Government Leaguers whom Big Jim collectively tarred as "that damned decency crowd."

George Hawkins, Folsom's legal adviser during his first term and House floor leader during the second, recalled how the "proper people" had shuddered when their outsized governor was pictured in the national press with his shoes off, stretched out for an afternoon snooze in public; and how proper tongues had clucked when Folsom, sensing that a peer was trying to bamboozle him at a national party gathering, had thrown an arm around Averell Harriman and bellowed, "Governor, why don't you quit *pissin' down my leg?*"

Hawkins also remembered the stunned expression that crossed the face of the governor of New York when he suddenly realized that the six-foot-eight, 250-pound hulk breathing Bourbon fumes and populist fire down at him (and how many people ever breathed *down* on Averell Harriman?) was an undomesticated political animal unlike any he had ever seen in the wilds of the Hudson River valley.

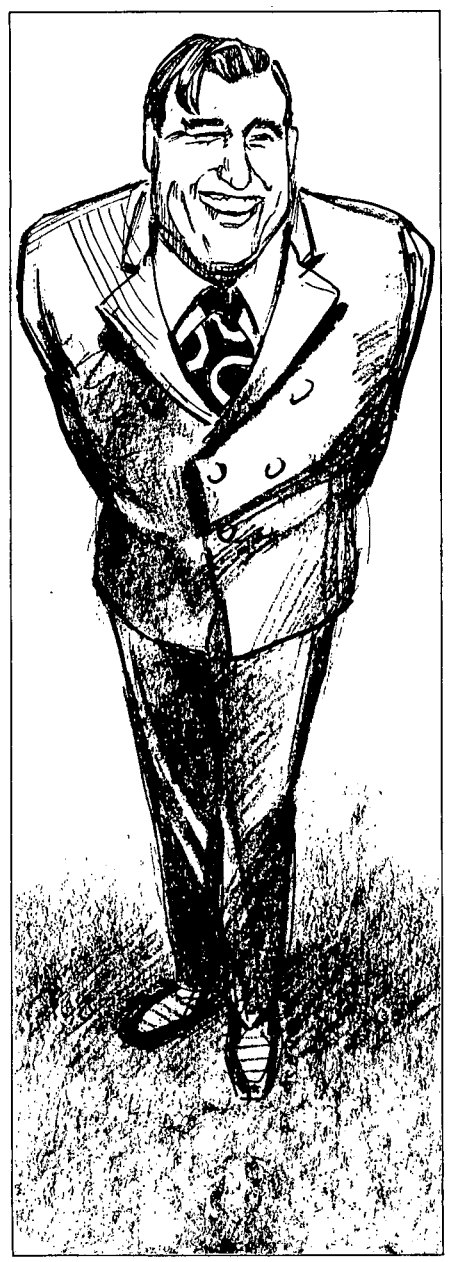
For that matter, Big Jim Folsom was an original by his own state's political standards. Until he came along, Alabama politics had been bromidic and predictable. There had been the eccentric senator "Cotton Tom" Heflin, who deserted the party of his fathers in 1928, warning fellow Democrats that if Al Smith were elected President, "The Pope will sail up Mobile Bay in a submarine." Beyond Heflin, the only colorful figure on the state's political landscape had been Bibb Graves, a downhome governor best described as a hominy-grits Dick Daley.

Graves practiced one-party machine politics with a south Alabama drawl, manipulating the county courthouse bosses the way Daley pulled the strings on Chicago's precinct bosses. It was Graves who coined the phrase "Big Mules" to characterize Alabama's economic establishment—the steel, coal, electric power, and railroad operators who traditionally had their way when dealing with the state legislature. But while Graves had the common touch, his style was better-suited to the smoke-filled room than the speaking stump. He could coin an occasional phrase and work a crowd, but his real power derived from a native talent for stroking the courthouse barons of Alabama's sixty-seven counties.

It remained for Big Jim Folsom, at age 37, to do for Alabama what Huey Long did for Louisiana, "Pa" Ferguson did for Texas, Cole Blease did for South Carolina, and Gene Talmadge did for Georgia—turn his state's politics into an entertainment form.

• • •

Folsom lost his first two political races—for Congress in 1936 and governor in 1942. But in 1946, he came back strong with a



Victor Gold is The American Spectator*'s national correspondent.*

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populist campaign that dazzled the state. He hired a band called the Strawberry Pickers, picked up an old mop and a galvanized iron bucket, and promised to clean out the Capitol. . . . He promised a $50-a-month pension for everyone over 65, a paved road past every rural mail box, and higher pay for teachers. And he proposed abolition of the poll tax, theorizing that it disenfranchised poor white voters as well as blacks.

—Don Phillips, the Washington Post
November 22, 1987

Thanks to James Earl Carter, the term "populist" became the In word of political reportage in the 1970s and eighties; but contrary to national media perception, Carter was no populist. In one sense and one sense only did he fit the populist mold: he was a political outsider who was forced by circumstance to follow the fundamental populist credo, "If you can't join 'em, beat 'em."

But Carter on the campaign trail was a bore, a candidate devoid of the saving wit that separates true populists from other politicians. He smiled (and smiled, and smiled), but the litmus for the populist pol is his ability to make others smile. More than smile, laugh—at the establishment, the system, the political process, even the candidate himself.

Frank Long, a Folsom confidante during his second term as governor, remembered Big Jim's public response to charges that he had (1) invited Adam Powell over for drinks; (2) been arrested near Birmingham for driving-while-under-the-influence; (3) had a one nighter with a blonde in east Tennessee:

•"When I heard this New York Congressman was passing through town, I thought, well, I'm the Governor and it's my job to show him some Southern hospitality. So I had him to the mansion. That much is true. But that business about having a Scotch-and-soda with him, that's pure lie. Everybody knows I don't drink Scotch. Only Bourbon."

•"Folks, those Birmingham Gotrocks[1] look down their nose at ol' Big Jim. I'm not up to their high society standard. Check the record. You'll find I wasn't *good* enough to get into the Birmingham jail until I became Governor of Alabama."

•"A friend warned me, 'Big Jim,' he said, 'your enemies plan to trap you. They're gonna get a beautiful blonde and a bottle of fine whiskey in a hotel room and invite you up.' And I told my friend, 'Is that so? Well, let me tell you something. If that's the way they aim to trap me—a beautiful blonde and a bottle of fine whiskey—if that's their bait, they'll catch Big Jim *every* time!"

It followed that this sort of *mea culpa*-with-a-wink (*Yes*, I had a drink with a black Congressman; *Sure*, I was arrested in Birmingham; *You bet* I spent a night with a blonde) only compounded Big Jim's image problem with the "damned decency crowd." He wasn't merely guilty-as-charged, they said, but brazen about it. Worse than brazen, cynical. And they were right, of course, to the extent that a healthy dose of cynicism is part-and-parcel of the populist *Weltanschauung*. The populist constituency—farmers, workers, those who deal in real, not intangible goods—knows the distance between political words and political deeds. What the establishment sees as cynicism, the populist appreciates as candor from the unlikeliest of sources—a working politician.

My own favorite Folsom story involved Big Jim's candid appraisal of what he did for a living, when all

[1]What Bibb Graves called the "Big Mules," Big Jim called the "Gotrocks." He divided his political opponents into three parts: (1) the old Alabama aristocracy that traced their names and lost fortunes to the Civil War; (2) the industrial moguls headquartered in Birmingham; and (3) the would-be moguls looking for a friendly administration in Montgomery, i.e., "the Hadrocks, the Gotrocks, and the Wanna-get-rocks."

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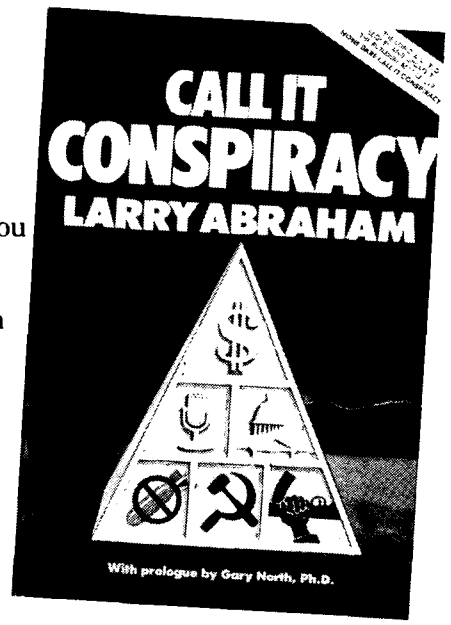

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the gilding of office and unction of power were stripped away. The scene was downtown Birmingham, Folsom's least-favorite Alabama town, the time a Saturday morning in the autumn of 1954. No, make that '55. Folsom was in the back seat of a Plymouth sedan parked across from the Redmont Hotel when Frank Long knocked on the window to introduce him to a young friend with a special talent Big Jim might find useful.

Folsom rolled down the window. "Governor," said Frank, "I'd like you to meet Vic Gold, the best P.R. man in the state of Alabama." Big Jim smiled and shook his head. "Maybe second-best," he replied, looking me over. "If he was the *best* then *he'd* be Governor, not me."

• • •

"If I were President, I'd use the old corn shuck mop on the monopolists, the Wall Street lawyers, and the State Department fancy pants who've never done an honest day's work or even talked to anybody who has."

—Big Jim Folsom,
candidate for the Democratic
presidential nomination, 1948

Before Wallace, there was Folsom. Who knows? That might be how George got the idea that a Governor of Alabama, as he later told audiences, "has as much right to run for President of the United States as the Governor of New York, or California, or any other state."

But 1948, as events proved out, wasn't Big Jim's year. America wasn't quite ready for a six-foot-eight, 250-pound populist from the Deep South who, in the over-used phrase of the 1960s and seventies, told-it-like-it-is. Truman was re-nominated by the Democrats on a hot night in Philadelphia, and the State Department fancy pants were secure in their jobs for another four years.

As for Big Jim himself, he didn't even make it to the convention. The Segs, calling themselves Dixiecrats, took over the Alabama state party machinery, elected a delegation pledged to walk out of the national convention, and left Folsom high (but assuredly not dry) in Montgomery, unable even to get enough votes to become a delegate. "God in His infinite wisdom has decreed," explained Big Jim, conceding defeat, "that I can't be elected anything but Governor of Alabama."

Bad timing again. Whether Big Jim Folsom was ahead of his time or behind it is open to argument. What's certain is that he wasn't on schedule. He lived in an era when the state party machines were in place, dictating the people's options as to presidential nominees. The machines said Truman, and that same year the Republican machines, given a choice between Dewey, Taft, and Stassen, nominated the governor of New York.

But imagine, if you will—exhilarant suspension of disbelief—imagine a young Big Jim, one born forty years later, on the hustings there in Iowa, New Hampshire, corn shuck mop in hand, galvanized iron bucket by his side, Strawberry Pickers warming up the crowd. Or a Big Jim, on stage debating in Des Moines or Manchester, telling his peer from Massachusetts (or New York), "Governor, why don't you quit pissin' down the people's leg?"

Something to ponder in this era of bromidic, predictable politics, bellied as it is with ersatz "populists" spieling macro-and-micro-economic theory, furrow-browed and humorless in their tailor-made suits. Or course, times *have* changed and, as everyone seated around the table at the Holiday Inn agreed, if Big Jim were in his prime today he'd have to adapt his style to the age of television.

For that, he might need some help. Maybe even a P.R. man. □

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MAINSTREAM MARXISM REBUTTED

by Melville J. Ulmer

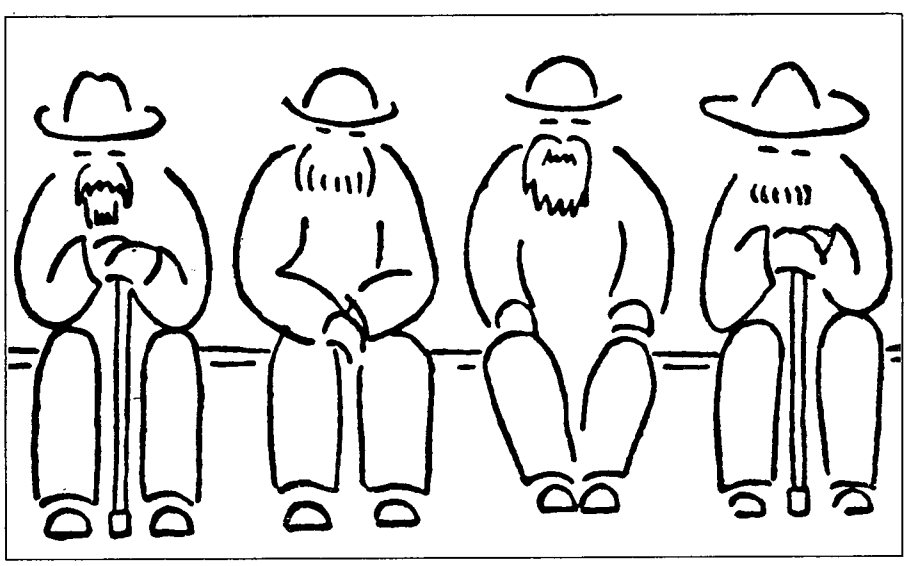
I call them respectable radicals since they are committed Marxists who commonly pass for liberals, as foxes, if they could, would pass for spaniels. They are mostly the precocious spawn of the tumultuous 1960s now grown up to brew their tartuferies as professors, in major universities and some schools of lesser rank. Though rarely recognized as a cohesive group—and still less as revolutionaries incognito—they are today a source of growing political influence. In the nation's drift to the political right during the past decade, they have served as a stubbornly dragging anchor, diluting confidence in prevailing institutions and buttressing opposition and dissent. Their impress on public opinion stems from a phenomenal ability to penetrate not only the universities but also powerful congressional staffs, strategic government bureaus, reputable research institutes, and political organizations deemed to be conventionally liberal.

Their identification with left-of-center liberals is supported by the immediate reforms they advocate—public employment, guaranteed jobs in industry, higher taxes on upper incomes, cuts in defense, stiffened business regulations, up with minimum wages, down with Reagan, and so on. Most are professional economists, often of some note, adding thoroughly unwarranted weight to their policy advices.

As Marxists, however, respectable radicals are strictly collectivist in their long-term goals. As the University of California's Howard Sherman declaimed in his introductory textbook *Radical Political Economy* (1972): "I am a Marxist. . . . It seems that only a socialist revolution can lay the foundations for a society where there is equal opportunity for all people, continuing economic prosperity, freedom of expression in culture, politics and science, and peace." But since they do not expect an American revolution very soon, their short-term goal is less overweening: i.e., to displace conservative federal administrations, if and when they arise, with ones tilted as far as possible to the left. Accordingly, for public consumption respectable radicals appear as simply indignant, often hot-headed liberals.

The most enduring organization of radicals in academe has been the Union of Radical Political Economists (URPE), founded jointly at Harvard and the University of Michigan (Ann Arbor) in 1968. The founding fathers were advanced graduate students already on university payrolls as instructors, most often in social science survey courses. URPE now has a membership of about 2,000, about one-tenth that of the all-inclusive American Economic Association. It is reinforced by another 8,000 in sister organizations drawn from political science, history, sociology, psychology, anthropology, English literature, law, even the sciences, and such new "disciplines" as women's studies, African studies, peace studies, and criminal justice. But despite this variegated font for collegiate brainwashing, it is URPE and its economists who rise above all others of this company in engineering public assaults on America's political and economic system.

For that task the radical economists are especially well equipped. Typically, they wield quick pens and a persuasive patter capable of swaying the mass of liberal sentiment. They publish widely, not only in professional journals including their own (the quarterly *Review of Radical Political Economics*), but also in popular magazines (like the *New Yorker* and *Harper's*), prestigious newspapers (like the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post*), and even in the official literature of the federal government (such as reports of the Joint Economic Committee of Congress). They are also deft practitioners of affirmative action—that is, affirmatively in support of fellow radicals. The result over time has been an unnatural political homogeneity in some university departments as well as in a few pockets of the federal government. As extreme examples, the economics departments of the University of Massachusetts (Amherst) and the New School for Social Research in New York are populated almost entirely by URPE members.



Four central themes govern the respectable radicals' efforts: (1) The Reagan Administration has undermined America's industrial might, beating it down to second-class status. (2) Opportunities to rise in the nation's economy, except for the already rich, have disappeared. (3) In a living caricature of capitalist avarice, the distribution of income has grown retrogressively more unequal. (4) Redressing these evils requires intervention by government on a scale hitherto unapproached. Examples abound of the logical and statistical machinations mobilized in support of these theses, but so thoroughly have they penetrated our daily literature that for casual readers distinguishing fact from planted myth is often impossible, even assuming the will to try.

Consider the alleged battering of the American economy, now crushed despairingly below that of our trading partners—uncompetitive and "deindustrialized," as a study by Bennett Harrison and Barry Bluestone maintained. That proposition has been repetitively entertained in impressive books by radicals Robert Heilbroner, Robert Lekachman (the reputed "dean" of socialist economists), Samuel Bowles, David Gordon, Thomas Weisskopf, and Jack Gurley. Add to that almost countless articles by the prolific Gordon, Harrison, and Gar Alperovits, plus "studies" supported by the Urban Institute, the Institute for Policy Studies, the Joint Economic Committee of Congress, and sundry other organizations. Such "findings" have been gratefully circulated through virtually all channels of publication, in rapid succession as though one confirmed the other. They have also been summarized and extended, in effect, by left-liberals like Lester Thurow in his highly regarded *The Zero-Sum Solution: Building A World-Class American Economy* (1985). Even the gruff and normally astute conservative John McLaughlin succumbed to the mesmerism of constant repetition, lamenting (in *National Review*, July 31, 1987) that America's real per capita GNP had dropped "for the first time below Japan's and West Germany's." He could not have been further from the truth.

In fact, according to the latest (1987) reports of *all* authoritative sources (including the World Bank, the Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development, the United Nations, and the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics), the

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U.S.'s real GNP per capita exceeded Japan's by 41 percent, West Germany's by 33 percent, and Great Britain's by fully 51 percent. Not only that but our commanding lead over the rest of the world grew in recent years with higher productivity and employment rates. As for the specific libel of "deindustrialization" circulated even by the Joint Economic Committee of Congress, our total real GNP rose by 18 percent since 1981 while investment scooted up by 26 percent, showing vigorous *further* industrialization. One result has been a spectacular world-leading increase in output per man-hour, a statistic that hits the eyes of doomsayers like denatured alcohol.

All the numbers just cited may be easily found in any public library. Except in rare cases such as McLaughlin's, the failure to acknowledge them—indeed the willful fabrication of falsehoods to replace them—is consistent only with a concerted determination to deceive the general public and manipulate its political decisions.

Perhaps the radical deceptions that cut most deeply into people's faith in public policies are those related to such tender topics as compassion and fairness. That "the poor get poorer and the rich richer" is a refrain that embellishes virtually all radical literature and rings tinkling bells among liberals too. The techniques used for obscuring realities in this area are more subtle than those described above, which simply required brazen prevarication. The ruse in this instance is to publish an apparently innocent but clearly dumb official government tabulation and then blatantly misinterpret it. The tabulation in question, concocted by the Census Bureau, shows what it advertises as "Money Income of Families: Percent Distribution."

The title alone, as we'll see, is ingenuously deceptive, but we'll let that go for the moment. With the help of a microscope one may detect in these figures a slight decline over the last ten or twenty years in the proportion of the nation's money income going to the poorest fifth of the population and a tiny increase in that going to the richest fifth. The changes are small enough to be easily accounted for by sampling and other measurement errors. Nevertheless they are large enough to support sloganeering on the left, all solemnly published by the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, and other respected founts of public information. But that is the least of the story.

A carefully overlooked but relevant datum is that the median family income, after correction for inflation, advanced by more than one-third in the past twenty-five years and by 10 percent just since 1982. That strongly suggests that the poor as well as the rich have gained. But most important of all is the fact that the Census tabulation is a mindless exercise in bureaucratic routine, utterly meaningless for the purpose used. For it thoroughly excludes *every one of the measures adopted by society to increase equality since the 1930s*, to wit: (1) It measured incomes *before* payment of income taxes, which obviously hit upper incomes most and much of the poor not at all. (2) It excludes non-money income which happens to be the largest and fastest growing segment of assistance for the poor, now costing taxpayers about $70 billion annually. (Reference is to food stamps, Medicaid, housing subsidies, and the like.) (3) It also misses much of the welfare payments in cash, which in undetermined amounts go unreported. (4) It takes no account of the population's age distribution, specifically, an increase in the proportion of young workers relative to the middle-aged (when lifetime incomes are at a peak), contributing a false bias toward inequality.

Some enterprising private economists estimated the net effect of these omissions. Their results showed a pronounced trend toward equality during the past twenty to thirty years, a finding that would clearly cheer the egalitarians among us if they took time out from denying it. For predictably, the radical response to such refutations is to ignore them. Nor do documented facts and logic deter some of the radicals' liberal sympathizers, like Lester Thurow and Lawrence Klein, from reproducing again and again the misleading Census tabulation just described, without appropriate corrections.

A full account of other disinformation would occupy a heavyweight treatise. Here is the sparest partial summary I can devise:

•In the past five years a record-breaking business expansion created 13 million new jobs. The line of radicals is that the new jobs were of the meanest possible dead-end luncheon-counter variety. Fact: between 1982 and 1987 the total number of minimum-wage employees actually declined by 25 percent compared with a 50-percent *increase* in those holding jobs paying $10 or more per hour.

•Radicals indicted Reagan's 1981 tax cuts for favoring the rich. Fact: the proportion of total taxes paid by the richest one percent rose from 18 percent in 1981 to more than 23 percent in 1985 (the latest year for which IRS data are available).

•Abetted by radicals, the myth has grown that self-indulgent Americans have cut their savings to the bone, thus squeezing the nation's investment. Facts: real household assets rose by 53 percent since 1980 compared to a 3 percent rise in all of the 1970s. From 1980 to 1987 the nation's gross investment advanced by 60 percent.

•Because of foreign inroads, radicals had claimed, manufacturing in the U.S. collapsed in 1986 with at least thirty-one states thrown into depression. Facts: manufacturing output rose in *every* year from 1982 through 1987, by 35 percent in all. Of the thirty-one states they cited, fourteen enjoyed even stronger advances than the nation as a whole, in employment as well as production.[1]

In sum, a massive flow of misinformation has been generated about American society, much of it—probably most—originated by a relatively small number of home-grown radical economists allied, in disguise or not, with liberals. The deceptions have won the widest possible popular circulation. It is of course not possible to measure the ultimate impact on public opinion with anything resembling precision. Nevertheless there is considerable evidence that the radical-liberal efforts have at least not been entirely ineffectual.

The most authoritative analysis available of some thirty national opinion polls discloses a distinct "decline in public confidence in American economic and political institutions" from the 1960s to date. The trend was indeed broken by temporary recoveries but was definitely downward in the long-term and downward most recently. I mean to ring no alarm bells here, since the basic undertow of public sentiment seems still to be dominantly centrist or conservative. What is wanting mainly is vigorous leadership to guide it through the present confusions. □

[1]The last two items were inspired by that Sherlock Holmes of statistical skullduggery, Warren T. Brookes of the *Washington Times*.

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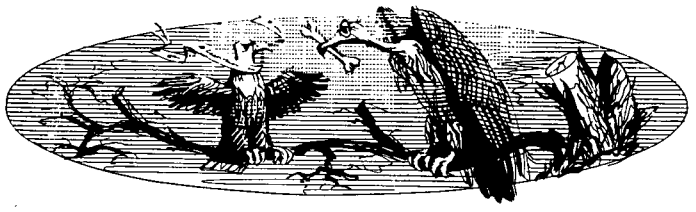

THE REPUBLICANS IN MID-AMERICA

by Kent Owen

This winter Midwestern Republicans have more to worry about than who is going to win their presidential nomination. If one can tell the continental drift from an Indiana vantage—a shaky perch with partially obstructed sight-lines—it looks as though George Bush will come out on top. His standing with state committees from Ohio to Nebraska and Minnesota to Missouri is very good, and his appearances at fund-raising dinners and party rallies have left favorable impressions, even on those inclined to doubt that his performance is as remarkable as his resume. With such a base of organizational support, the Vice President must be described as the decided favorite, if not quite a cinch.

What bothers Republican insiders is the hard-to-calculate strength of the Reverend Pat Robertson's Christian fundamentalists, who last year surprised standard-bred Michigan Republicans by taking over enough precinct delegate selections to become a forceful presence in the state committee. At the time, the uprising was publicized as embarrassing to the party regulars who should have seen it coming, namely the Bush supporters. Because of the relative complexity of the process (or, more accurately, its simplicity and ease of access), the Michigan choosing-bees, like the Iowa caucus system, are vulnerable to onslaughts by church bus-loads of Republicans-come-lately. Just as the Democrats were caught napping in the last Illinois primary by Lyndon LaRouche's opportunists, so might the Republicans of Iowa, Michigan, and elsewhere in the Middle West find themselves overwhelmed by Robertson's raiders who know how to sign up voters, pack them at polling sites, and control meetings.

Conventional Republicans can be fervent in their loyalties, but few are used to dealing with the likes of hot-eyed religionists who hold their cause to be the will of God. In campaigns past, whatever the width of their differences, Republicans were self-consciously genteel, alarmed at the thought of a scene. Though often complacent as becomes the better sort of people, they were correct, unless, of course, there were some higher principle to be served. For Republicans of this kidney, it's bad form to intrude religion into politics, not only because it offends the canons of taste, but also because it threatens to undo common sense. Besides, it's damned unnerving to play politics with people so earnest that they talk in tongues, think in theological categories, and believe themselves divinely commissioned.

If the Iowa caucuses were to produce a large vote for Robertson, large enough to discomfit George Bush and Robert Dole, it might be useful mischief. Until now, ordinary Republicans, particularly Midwesterners, have welcomed newcomers with the tacit understanding that nothing much would change as a result: refugees from FDR's Democratic New Deal coalition were taken in as provisional members in the hope that they would soon adapt themselves to the GOP's way of doing things. For Midwestern Republicans that way has usually meant a deliberate avoidance of combative, confrontational intra-party politics. At the same time, for all the outward shows of single-minded unity, Republican activists have at one another with about the same amount of pettiness that special-interest Democrats work up among themselves. But Republicans have seldom been challenged within their own councils by so intense and insistent a crowd as the Christian rightists. None of the extremist groups of the past—Birchers, Liberty Lobbyists, reactionaries—ever made deep, lasting inroads. That absence of internal opposition made for a smug centrism, which eventually co-opted almost every ideologue and upstart.

Evangelicals and fundamentalists are changing the way Republicans conduct their affairs, making the party, at least in Michigan and Iowa, less clubby and relaxed. On the evidence of how the Robertsonites are behaving in Iowa, overthrowing party regulars with parliamentary maneuvers and caucus-packing forays, the GOP's custodians are going to have to get tougher and shrewder, prepared to repel boarders with weapons sharper than sweet reason and good fellowship. The trick, of course, is to keep the loyalty—at least the votes—of the Robertsonites without letting them grab control of the party organization. Generally, crusaders expend their energies in one grand campaign and then wander away, once the novelty wears off. Midwesterners pride themselves on their staying power—they either come of pioneer stock or acquire what it takes to settle—and that old habit of not giving in to adversity, of not panicking in the face of attack, should enable them to succeed.

Despite the machinations of his followers, Pat Robertson himself has not made much headway. His rictal grin, phony as a Lions Club tail-twister's, inspires derision among the normally tolerant, who recall the visage of Jimmy Carter and shudder. The parsonly soothingness of his speech also sticks in the craw. Obviously, the travails of the last year do little to quicken the public's confidence in television evangelists, whether they are soliciting prayers, cash, or votes. The Rev. Mr. Robertson claims an exemption from the obloquy heaped on his shadier brethren, for he can exhibit more reputable tokens of achievement—bachelor's and law degrees, experience in the broadcasting and education industries, random civic involvement. Unless Midwestern Republicans acquire a taste for moralizing—a decent respect for the less objectionable pieties and hypocrisies is our custom—they will not make Mr. Robertson their candidate, although they may have to put up with his more determined supporters for some time to come.

If the GOP's right most faction can't find a winner in Pat Robertson, the clear alternative is Rep. Jack Kemp. Why his campaign should be in the doldrums in the Midwest as elsewhere is puzzling. Then again, any politician with such a passion for the intricacies of economics is likely to lose voters who fail to grasp the romance of marginal utility or the Laffer curve. The ex-quarterback from Buffalo is as lively and quick-witted a stump-speaker as the GOP can provide nowadays (Sen. Alan Simpson of Wyoming may hold the edge), and he gives off a pep-rally cheeriness, that of an earnest, presentable fellow who can balance the outlines of deep thought with the concerns of an urban social worker. Somehow or other Congressman Kemp's level of enthusiasm, whether for urban enterprise zones, tax rate reduction, or social safety nets, stays at a uniformly high pitch. In a hoarse, energetic delivery he makes everything sound much the same, every proposal, every project, every scheme propounded without the slightest doubt as to its wonder-working power. Through it all darts the suspicion that these are recently acquired items, the discoveries of an autodidact who has not yet formed the connections that derive learning from knowledge. In short, Mr. Kemp has already proved himself useful in the ventilation of issues—the campaign would be stuffier without him—but he is regarded from a Midwestern perspective as a back-up, not a starter. Those who admire his record

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in Congress and think him underrated are willing to have him as Vice President, which may be his proper niche.

Maybe somewhere in Chicagoland, Alexander Haig can find support for his bluff, gruff, but ill-defined campaign. The general's hard-boiled pragmatism should appeal to urban Republicans whose appreciation of superbly executed careerism could light on no fitter exemplar. Still it is curious that this most prominent soldier-statesman since George Catlett Marshall (except, of course, for Dwight D. Eisenhower) rouses a fever of distrust. Opportunism rarely disqualifies men from public office, unless such nimbleness of timing and positioning seems blatantly overreaching. Which in General Haig's case may be the trouble. While he attracts few adherents among Midwestern Republicans, he draws watchful notice because he seems ready to saber his rivals in the coolness of debate. General Haig's place in the campaign is less one of serving to stress such issues as the Strategic Defense Initiative and the reduction of intermediate-range nuclear weapons than of provoking a unilateral attack from one of his fellow candidates. In these parts the smart money is betting he will be the first to fall, unless Pierre du Pont beats him to it.

Governor du Pont had, before the cavalcade of television panels, piqued more than routine interest with unconventional views on restructuring the Social Security system and mandatory drug testing in public schools, notions bound to be controversial. Indiana Republicans who have dealt with him through the Hudson Institute, the think tank based in Indianapolis, whose board of directors he had chaired, speak highly of him and his accomplishments in Delaware, which may have been harder for a du Pont to bring off than one would suppose. But Pete du Pont has already come a cropper in the TV steeplechase. His gibes at George Bush seemed petty and peevish, and his emphatic concern for the baby boomers' future burdens overplayed. Thus, whatever his motives, he has given the impression of a man who accepts bad advice from his handlers and comes to grief because of it. Then, too, he suffers from a disability he shares with Mr. Bush: a patrician appearance and manner of speech that must be given a regular-guy treatment for mass consumption. Although his chances are scarcely encouraging, he is the one Republican candidate who hints at holding more substance in reserve—intelligence, breadth of intellectual curiosity, administrative forcefulness, potentiality for resourceful leadership—than he has so far been able to display on television. Indeed, it is within the gift of that fateful medium to make sound and thoughtful men appear vague, and the shallow and glib appear decisive. Mr. du Pont is a man worth keeping in mind for other kinds of public service.

To no one's surprise the real struggle for the Republican nomination is between George Bush and Robert Dole. The senior senator from Kansas should expect built-in support from the Middle West, and that he has, particularly in the western reaches. If his late summer appearances in Indianapolis were a fair sample of his powers, he fell short of the expectations of many Republicans who were ready to join his camp, not because of any firm opposition to the Vice President but because of doubts that he can be elected against, say, Mario Cuomo, if it should come to that teasing eventuality.

What Republicans say they like about Senator Dole is toughness and determination. That sense is reinforced by his sardonic wit, taken to indicate he is smart, can look out for himself, and sees through courtiers and phonies. Some who have heard him speak, both extemporaneously and from texts, report the senator is less articulate and cogent than they had supposed. When

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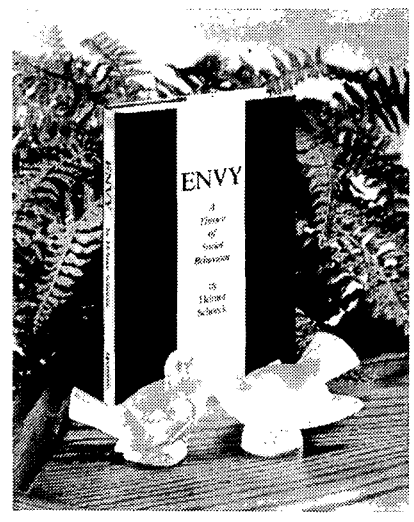
ENVY

By Helmut Schoeck



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it comes to specific issues, Mr. Dole is identified primarily with deficit reduction, restoration of economic stability, and broader-based prosperity, all of which are sensible concerns in the Middle West. Republicans who have watched him operate at close range insist his commanding presence enables him to work his will in negotiations. However, legislative talent, like the legendary prowess of Lyndon Baines Johnson, may not register so strongly on Americans at large beyond the confines of the Capitol. The problem becomes one of how to dramatize as vividly as possible the forcefulness of the Dole personality, which comes across as coarse-grained, rough-edged, flat, and flinty, not unlike much of Kansas itself.

All the same, Midwestern Republicans are by no means opposed to Bob Dole. On the contrary, the American national character they see in him is what they see in themselves: straightforwardness, tenacity, clear-eyed realism best expressed in earthy, well-informed common sense. In many ways those are the qualities they also see in George Bush. It is simply that they know and like Mr. Bush better. Probably, no presidential candidate in the history of the Republic has ever been so abused for being a gentleman. To his sorrow and the nation's, Mr. Bush has been mocked for scrupulous loyalty to the President, conscientious discharge of the duties entrusted to him, and for convictions about honor, integrity, and the obligation of public service for those who enjoy the privilege of good fortune. The knavish taunt of "wimp" attacks Mr. Bush's gentle breeding and good manners, mistaking gentlemanly virtues for weakness and vacillation. (Our egalitarians are quick to shame courtesy as a grave offense to a militantly classless America in which rudeness ought to be the standard.)

No doubt it's unfortunate Mr. Bush reveals a boyish exuberance that is less than becoming, his voice tightening to a whine. He is not naturally eloquent, and his words are often too casual, even downright banal. But these are hardly moral defects. One senses in him and, moreover, in Mrs. Bush and their family, a wealth of decency, kindness, and urbanity, cultivated knowledge of what ought to matter most in life. In an age when the characters of public officials and eminent citizens in general are exposed to merciless scrutiny, it is reassuring to have George Bush in the thick of things. There is about Mr. Bush a sense of proportion, a disposition to act in moderation, a self-assured capacity for learning the common good, unimpeded by dogmatism, ideology, or sentimentality.

Nowhere in America does the question of character count for more than in the Middle West, where one's judgment and conduct, private and public alike, have never been matters of mere fashion. Consequently, Midwestern Republicans have reason to believe George Bush is that finest of public men, the principled idealist whose actions are tempered by the lessons of history and an understanding of the changing elements of real life.

With the exception of Parson Robertson, none of the Republican candidates rouses his Midwestern supporters to unseemly passion. In fact, the antics of the Robertsonites confirm the Midwestern Republican's conviction that sound politics, like sound government, requires caution and moderation, a deliberate refusal to be lathered into reckless enthusiasm. In a sense, this makes the difference between *settlement* conservatism and *movement* conservatism: the understanding reached through considered experience that the whole of a man's character must count for more than the partiality of his faith in ideological or theological abstractions. It is also why interoceanic America can generally resolve the tensions and conflicts of the age more wisely than the nation's bicoastal extremists. That is, if we just don't get too cussed smug about it. □

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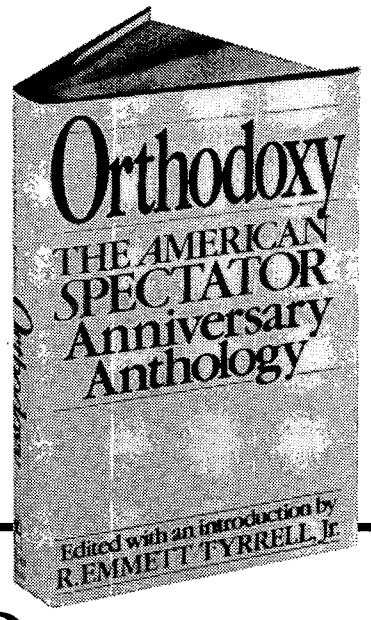

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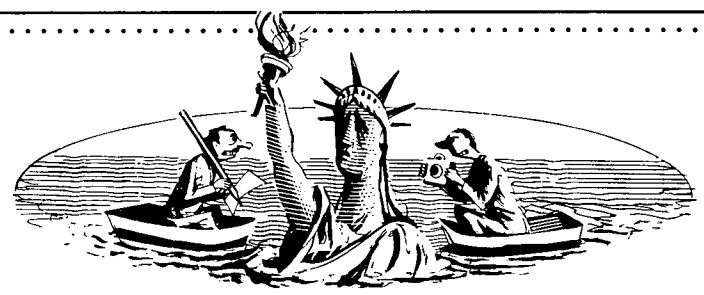

WHEN THE SOVIETS COME TO WASHINGTON

by Michael Ledeen

The coverage of the summit is probably best left to the drama critics and the psychoanalysts, but a few points are appropriate.

First, the West has been enthusiastic about every new Soviet dictator, and cheered every announcement of the "liberalization" of the Soviet economic system. Thus, Lenin's New Economic Policy was greeted with hosannas back in the 1920s, Stalin was hailed as a moderate, Khrushchev's thaw was considered a new era, Andropov was the consummate liberal, and even the colorless Chernenko was given high marks for his open-mindedness (for the few months when people believed he was actually alive). Thus, the highly positive treatment of Gorbachev is not new; it is a continuation of a 70-year old pattern of Western response to events in Moscow.

Second, the summit marked a new high (or low) in the Kremlin's efforts to achieve "moral equivalence" with the United States. The very fact that Western pollsters now consider it routine to compare the popularity ratings of Gorbachev with those of Reagan indicates that there are many people who put them on the same political plane.

Third, in many ways Gorbachev received a gentler treatment from our journalists than Reagan did, and this is also traditional; even Khomeini got the "kid gloves" treatment when he was living in the suburbs of Paris, and Qaddafi's memorable NBC interview was remarkable for its gentleness. The toughest questions at the marathon Gorby press conference in Washington came not from the lambs of our press corps, but rather from British correspondents (and, surprisingly, from Mary McGrory, the sole American exception) who reminded the Soviet dictator that he had said a summit which consisted solely in signing an already agreed-upon INF treaty, and which did not make concrete progress in regional and other matters, would be a failure. Why was this not a failure? Gorbachev didn't like the question, and gave the journalists short shrift. Yet almost all of our people—from the White House to the newsrooms—were eager to usher in the "new era" of East-West relations, and didn't press the issue (at least in public—I am told that at the meetings with "intellectuals, academics, and journalists" at the Soviet Embassy there were some tough questions, to which Gorbachev responded quite huffily).

Fourth, although the Soviet promise to withdraw from Afghanistan is now seven years old (so far as I know, the first time it came up was during the first Haig-Gromyko talks way back in 1981—and Gromyko raised it all by himself with no prompting from the American side), it is often taken seriously, both by American diplomats and by American journalists. One would think that intense skepticism would have set in long since.

The two best assessments of the summit that I found were a charming op-ed piece by David Aaron in the *New York Times*, in which he marveled at the media's compulsion to fill the airwaves with summit-related material, even when that required them to interview each other, and an upbeat article by Zbigniew Brzezinski in the *Wall Street Journal*, which proclaimed Reagan the winner 3 to 1. He's right, but the victory may be pyrrhic; any President who believes that a new era is at hand, and that Gorbachev doesn't believe in the eventual triumph of Communism, might make some serious mistakes down the road a bit.

Meanwhile, it behooves us all to pay tribute to the *Los Angeles Times* which between October 25 and November 7 ran an eight-part series (in which only seven, oddly, were identified as part of the series) on the Soviet Union under Gorbachev. The *Times* sent a bevy of correspondents to produce the series: Dan Fisher, William J. Eaton, Robert Gillette, Stanley Meisler. To be sure, there are many weaknesses in the articles (Sovietology is a modern form of metaphysics, and it's a tough act to perform), such as the opening salvo by Fisher and Eaton on October 25: "Gorbachev is off to an impressive start. Since he came to power three years ago, the Kremlin leader has managed to substantially alter the traditionally forbidding image of his country abroad."

Fair enough, but they should have pointed out that this always happens. To their credit, Fisher and Eaton then continued with the crucial point, one which is often overlooked: "[The new image] is vital in order to ease international tensions and gain the breathing space and Western technology he needs to carry through his reforms." To which we can only add, "reforms are beside the point; he needs the technology from us in order to survive."

There is a certain innocence that seems inevitably to attach itself to American coverage of the Soviet Union, such as when we hear:

> Fyodor Buriatsky, a journalist and consultant to the party's Central Committee, estimated in an interview that one-third of the people actively support the Soviet leader's program, another one-third are against it, and the balance are taking a wait-and-see position.

Now unless I am totally mistaken, there are no Soviet "journalists" in our sense of the word; there are only writers who serve the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. And what could possibly provide the basis for the tripartite division of Soviet public opinion? Does the KGB now conduct polls? And would Mr. Mainstreet Soviet citizen tell the truth to pollsters? This sort of quotation deserves some warning flags for the unwary reader.

On the other hand, the *Times* series provides a first-class examination of daily life in the Soviet Union, ranging from rock stars whose records circulate, samizdat-style, among the young, but who do not perform publicly (and who receive royalties so small you need a computer to calculate their tininess), to patients in hospitals who need transfusions only to find that there is no blood bank, and get some blood from the anesthesiologist. The wretchedness of human existence is well described, as is the continued failure of the economy. As Robert Gillette put it,

> Nearly three years after Gorbachev's rise to power, the supply of meat and butter still falls far short of demand, as evidenced by continued rationing in a number of provincial cities, where adults are limited to as little as a kilogram . . . of meat and sausage and 200 grams . . . of butter a month . . . The late Soviet leader Leonid I. Brezhnev postponed resolution of the housing shortage from 1980 to 1990; Gorbachev has put it off to the year 2000 . . .

Furthermore, Gillette found Soviet officials who confirmed that the Kremlin "now devotes a much larger proportion of its gross national product to military spending than does the United States, as Western intelligence agencies have long contended." But Gillette does not point out that it is still

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illegal for Soviet citizens to provide accurate economic data to foreigners, and quotes without comment a claim that "a fair estimate of the real Soviet military commitment could be obtained by splitting the difference between the 7% of the U.S. GNP devoted to military spending and the CIA's 15% estimate for the Soviet Union."

You see, the current generation of Soviet disinformers have adopted a nice, symmetrical approach to life: public opinion divides into neat thirds, and on serious empirical questions, disputes are resolved by "splitting the difference." While the *Times* journalists don't think too deeply about the data they receive, they at least provide us with sufficient information so that we can make some intelligent deductions of our own. And that, dear friends, is all we can reasonably demand of our journalists.

The *Times* series also goes into considerable detail about the new "reforms," and shows us that while there are some showcase operations of the "new era," like private farming, there is very little rush to join the Gorbachev movement. Thus, as Dan Fisher put it, while there are many changes apparently under way, they are very fragile indeed. And of all the changes, the call for *glasnost*—openness—is the most fragile and easily reversible of all. Thus, Fisher tells us quite presciently, there are many intellectuals who are afraid of what is going on. (Fisher doesn't tell us one crucial element of this fear—that the Kremlin has often deceived its own people in the past.) "I'm rather afraid because there are no solid facts," says one intellectual. "There are many articles in the mass media, but I never come across any other manifestation of restructuring." And a painter who talked to Stanley Meisler "still felt nervous enough to ask that his last name not be used in any American newspaper story about him" (although the description of the man and his work will suffice for the KGB to track him down if it comes to that). Meisler has some wonderful lines, like: "Everyone agrees that a cafe like this could not have existed before Gorbachev. But it is not clear why. It is as if everyone believes that the simple act of having a good time with style and grace is a political statement that can only be made in an era of reform." Beautiful.

Finally, there are some good thoughts about the new generation of Soviet diplomats which should give us all pause. Meisler quotes a brilliant French foreign policy expert, Dominique Moisi: "For the first time that I can remember, American diplomats in Paris are not as bright and sophisticated as Soviet diplomats in Paris." To be sure, a lot of this is due to the dreadful decline in the quality of *our* diplomats, but the Russians have improved dramatically, and Moisi puts his finger on a major problem: "The United States is doing no more than react to the initiatives of Gorbachev. But that is not because American diplomats believe that is the wisest thing to do. It is because American diplomacy is so weak now." True, and well said.

If there are any awards for newspapers that make an honest effort to cover a major international story at the length it deserves, they should go this year to the *Los Angeles Times*.

The Bottom Line

The last word on Gorbachev comes from *L'Express* in Paris, written by Jean-Claude Casanova. He gives us the bottom line on Gorbachev's reforms:

These reforms, pushed to their limits, upset the workers because they impose mobility upon them, discontent the consumers because of the price increases, dispossess the bureaucrats of their privileges, and, finally, make the Party cadres nervous. It is only at the end of the experience, if it succeeds, that one will be able to rally these categories. From here to that point, it is not the Westerners who have to be convinced (they applauded every reform, beginning with Lenin's NEP), but the Soviet citizens. And these have paid too much to be satisfied with words. □

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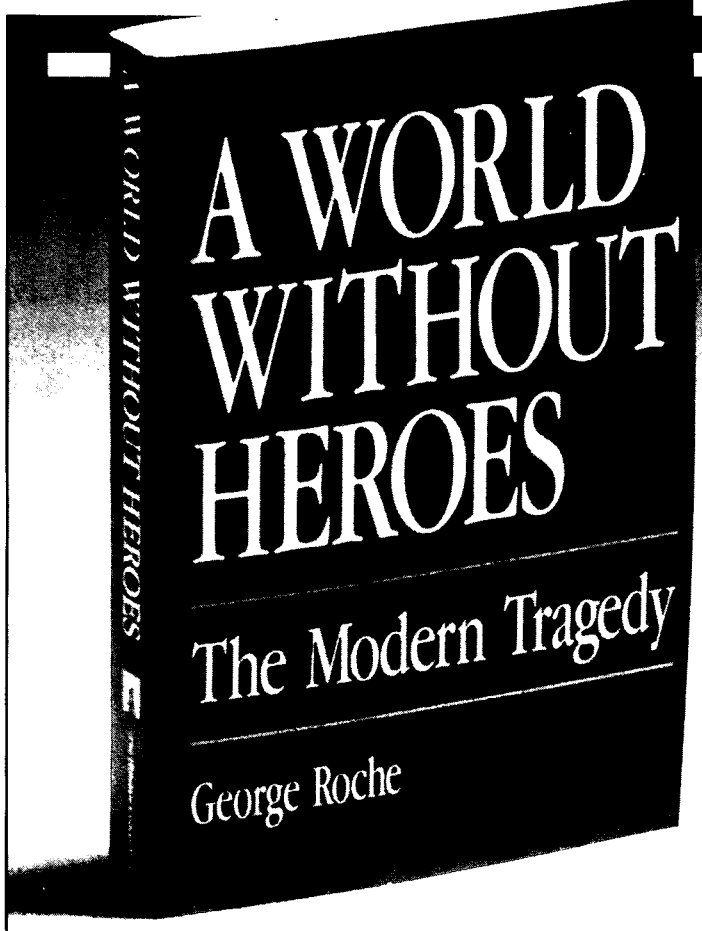

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BACK TO THE NEWSROOM

by Bruce Bawer

Our heroine is a cute, perky, sensitive, hard-working, highly principled, sexually square, auburn-haired television news producer. Her boss is a burly, balding, gruff-but-lovable fatherly type; her best buddy in the newsroom is a wisecracking, good-hearted, first-rate newswriter who's had a crush on her for years; her nemesis is a dumb-but-handsome anchorman.

"The Mary Tyler Moore Show"? No. The heroine I refer to is not Mary Richards but Jane Craig (Holly Hunter); the boss, not Lou Grant but Ernie Merriman (Robert Prosky); the buddy, not Murray Slaughter but Aaron Altman (Albert Brooks); and the nemesis —and love interest—not Ted Baxter but Tom Grunick (William Hurt). The movie is *Broadcast News*, which was written, directed, and produced by James L. Brooks, a co-creator and writer of "The Mary Tyler Moore Show."

Brooks struck sitcom gold with that series, and this time out he's very consciously working the same vein. Which, alas, is precisely what's wrong with *Broadcast News*: it falls uncomfortably in the no-man's-land between TV sitcom and movie comedy. What aggravates this problem is that it doesn't want to be just any movie comedy. No, it wants to be a *serious* comedy—a comedy about Human Relationships, a comedy with Something To Say, a comedy that simultaneously makes you think, makes you laugh till your sides split, and makes you feel warm all over. A comedy, that is, with aims much like those of Mr. Brooks's own *Terms of Endearment*.

Now, *Terms of Endearment*—which Brooks adapted very freely from Larry McMurtry's novel—was an odd movie. I didn't believe Shirley MacLaine for a moment as Debra Winger's possessive but emotionally inexpressive mama, but I bought it as a premise for the duration of the movie because so many funny situations were built upon it; nor, though his house was full of pictures of Saturn rockets and space capsules, did I believe that Jack Nicholson was an ex-astronaut; nor did I believe in Debra Winger's sudden fatal illness. Nicholson might just as believably have been a retired ballplayer, the ex-mayor of Chillicothe, Ohio, or the host of a syndicated teenage dance program; Winger, rather than dying of cancer, might just as convincingly have thrown herself under a train, gone into est, or taken up with a lesbian nun.

As in a sitcom, the dramatic complications and resolutions in *Terms* seemed not to have been coaxed delicately and sensitively out of the inner truth of the characters and the inner logic of the story, but to have been hammered out over bagels and cream cheese by half a dozen comedy writers. To be sure, Brooks pulled the strings well: I laughed my way through *Terms*, and when Winger died, my eyes teared up, but I left the theater thinking "How *phony*." If that doesn't happen with sitcoms, it's because their creators rarely stray beyond the genre's boundaries, never drag the phoniness out into the glare of sunlight. The lesson of *Terms* was that James L. Brooks doesn't know enough to stay out of the sun.

Broadcast News confirms that lesson. You may recall that *Terms* began with a prefatory childhood scene: MacLaine, the clinging mother, climbs into a crib in which her infant daughter is bawling her lungs out. It's cute, it's funny, it's a guaranteed laugh. It's also nothing more than a cheap visual gag—an unpromising way to begin a movie that wants not only to amuse but to be taken seriously. *Broadcast News* starts off in a similar fashion, with vignettes of the protagonists as children. Jane, age twelve or so, spends all her time writing; when her father calls her "obsessive," she dresses him down, in classic smart-TV-kid manner, for misusing a word whose precise clinical meaning by no means applies to her psychological state. Young Aaron, for his part, is an obnoxious high-school valedictorian who gets beat up by his classmates at graduation, then taunts them because they'll never make more than nineteen thousand dollars a year. And young Tom is a likable C-student who, as he explains to his dad, gets by on his great looks. (Though the actor who plays young Tom is only average-looking, we're apparently meant to take this self-description at face value.) At the end of each of these introductory vignettes, Brooks freezes the frame and superimposes a title (as at the close of *Animal House*) indicating how the kid will turn out; for instance, right after Young Tom's dad wonders aloud what the future might hold for a boy who's got nothing going for him but looks, we

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Bruce Bawer is The American Spectator*'s movie reviewer.*

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freeze on a close-up of the lad and Brooks superimposes the words "Future Network News Anchorman." That one gets a big laugh—mainly, of course, because of the cartoonish image of news anchormen that Brooks himself proffered on "The Mary Tyler Moore Show."

What's important about these prefatory vignettes is that none of them is dramatically necessary; they're the film's equivalent of the "teaser," that very brief scene which precedes the credits at the beginning of a sitcom, and which exists in TV-land only for practical purposes—namely, to make possible an extra commercial break. Good sitcom writers use the teaser to hook the audience in; Brooks does this at the beginning of *Broadcast News*, and simultaneously establishes that the film will be governed by a sitcom mentality. By the time the opening credits are rolling (as in *Terms*, they follow the teaser), we know that this is a film by a man who thinks of character as something that can be summed up in a single snappy exchange, a sharp one-liner.

From the credits we cut to Jane as a woman of thirty or so (i.e., Mary Richards's age when she got to Minneapolis). A segment producer for the news division of a Washington, D.C., network affiliate, Jane is introduced *in medias res* at a TV news convention, where she's delivering a heartfelt speech about the need for more substantial news programs. The audience finds her argument boring, and when she presents evidence of the superficiality of TV news—in the form of a network news-show videotape of a domino trick—her colleagues miss (or, actually, ignore) her point entirely and break into laughter and applause: they *enjoy* the dominoes. But Jane doesn't get any applause, and when the videotape is over the audience exits with unseemly haste. It's a funny sequence, yet it wants also to be taken seriously as stating a grim truth about the American media. And it simply doesn't do that. It's too glib, too exaggerated; no crowd of TV news people would find Jane's talk so dull, or those dominoes so fascinating.

But one person in Jane's audience stays to compliment her. Tom, a sometime sports reporter who's just been hired by her station as a newsman, is on his way up fast, but feels bad about it: "I'm no good at what I do," he confesses to Jane, whom he recognizes as having the intelligence, knowledge, and news sense that he lacks. Instead of respecting his honesty, however, Jane explodes in righteous anger: if he's incompetent, she tells him, he doesn't *belong* in this business, and should either educate himself fast or find some other line of work. Though they are drawn to each other, her explosion causes Tom to clear out pronto.

This opening sequence is a tidy job, I suppose: a few lines back and forth, and the film's main conflict is set up. Namely, Tom appeals to Jane but offends her most fervently held principles; as Aaron remarks later (as if we haven't already gotten the point!), "He personifies everything that you've been fighting against." Yet Jane's hostility to Tom doesn't make sense if you give it a moment's thought. The sequence at the news convention presumably means to suggest that TV news people are overwhelmingly amoral and unserious; Tom, who alone appreciates Jane's standards, would seem a relative paragon. Yet while Jane respects everyone else that she works with—is her news team different from all of those represented at the convention?—she has nothing but contempt for Tom. To be sure, over the course of the film she changes her attitude, and toward movie's end is ready to plight her troth; then it happens. Some time after Tom does an interview with a rape victim in which the camera cuts away to show him in tears, Aaron tells Jane that since Tom had only one camera crew, the cutaway must have been filmed afterwards and the tears faked. Horror of horrors! Jane is astonished and scandalized—a reaction which is downright ridiculous, since TV news cutaways are routinely faked. (This viewer, for one, assumed all along that Tom's cutaway was fake, and that it was understood to be so by all concerned; thus its magnification into the film's climactic issue lacked impact, to say the least.) Jane's forced to decide: love him or leave him?

So much for the plot, which at any rate does not develop so much as bounce from gag to gag; this film abounds with gimmicks that might be acceptable in a sitcom but must be counted here as structural flaws. Brooks drags Tom's father back into the story for no other reason than to set up a gag; Jane's romantic rival, a glamorous reporter named Jennifer Mack (Lois Chiles), is suddenly packed off in mid-movie to a long-term stint in Anchorage and is never heard from again. (Jane, by the way, is responsible for Jennifer's reassignment—an act which seems at least as morally objectionable as Tom's faked tears.) A major turning point comes when Aaron, having been given his big chance to anchor the weekend news, breaks out into a case of flop sweat so bad that within a couple of minutes his face is drenched and his shirt soaked through. It's a hilarious bit, but when it gives rise to a long sequence full of soul-searching and bitter accusation—all of which we are meant to take quite seriously—the picture seems like some bizarre collaboration between Mel Brooks and John Cassavetes. Another of the film's turning points, meanwhile, is overly evocative of the final episode of "The Mary Tyler Moore Show." Finally, several details in the film seem dubious: Would a local Washington reporter be sent to cover serial murders in Alaska? And what purpose does it serve to drag Jane and Aaron to Nicaragua for a brief, tonally incongruous sequence involving a contra-Sandinista battle?

At least Brooks gets good performances out of his stars. Holly Hunter is winning in a very Mary Tyler Moore-ish way; Albert Brooks brings to the movie a wonderful zaniness which I'm sure is exactly what his namesake director wanted but which doesn't work at all when the film shifts into serious gear. As for William Hurt, he proves to be so frighteningly believable as a dimwit that one feels as if one should take another, more careful look at his previous work. Yet his is a problematic role. One wonders why Hurt took it on; it's a confusingly written part which requires him to be at once a self-seeking, know-nothing jerk—the embodiment of everything that's wrong with TV news—and a good guy, sweet and modest and well-intentioned. This combination is not easily imagined and, though Hurt does his best, the character never quite comes into focus. This is not the only unaddressed contradiction in his character: Tom's polished performance as anchor would seem to demonstrate, his (and the film's) claims to the contrary, that he is actually very good at what he does—that he is as skilled a talking head, in other words, as Aaron is a field reporter; but the film never reconciles this fact with its otherwise condescending view of him.

But then, the script of *Broadcast News* is a most rickety contraption indeed, and when in its final pages Jane must decide whether to love Tom or leave him, the whole fragile structure collapses. For neither choice is dramatically workable. If she chooses to go with Tom, she's opting for the predictable romantic-comedy ending, and making it obvious that her declared moral objections to him were just plot gimmickry, and the film's pretensions to seriousness precisely that—pretensions. If, on the other hand, she decides to reject his love because of that faked cutaway, such an inane attempt at a "serious" ending cannot but expose the real shallowness of the material—a shallowness that the audience has allowed itself to ignore most of the way through because the majority of the film's "serious" points have been made by way of rapid-fire jokes and sight gags.

How does the film end? I won't give that away; but I will say that once all this nonsense is supposedly wrapped up, we're given a "tag" (as they call it in sitcomland) in which we meet our three main characters "seven years later." (Since the movie proper appears to be set in the present, it must be assumed that the tag takes us into the mid-1990s.) Brooks patently thinks this denouement is the sort of epic touch that will send his audience out of the theater recognizing that *Broadcast News* is not a typical romantic comedy but a sensitive and respectable film—a *real* story about *real* people with *real* feelings. But its effect is quite the opposite: the sequence is so embarrassingly predictable and contrived, the sentiments so facile and phony, that one staggers out of the theater wondering at the ability of a genuine sitcom talent to make such a mess of things on the big screen. *Terms of Endearment* showed us, and *Broadcast News* reminds us, that James L. Brooks doesn't know the difference between persons and personifications, characters and caricatures, emotion and sentimentality. Nor—for all his carrying on about the topic—does his understanding of the moral dimension of journalism go any deeper than the pep talks on First Amendment rights and such that Lou Grant served up back at WJM. Brooks is a talented man who has stumbled pathetically into the wrong genre; one can only hope he finds his way back home. □

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THE GREAT MAHARAJAH SALOON SERIES

THE POLO BAR IN JAIPUR

by Richard Brookhiser

The Polo Bar of the Rambagh Palace, Jaipur, India, isn't as hard to get to as it sounds. You arrive in New Delhi at some ungodly early hour, and ride to your hotel in a boxy Indian taxi, down the wide streets deserted but for barreling trucks and cabbies sleeping on roadside cots. You fly to Jaipur, allowing an hour or two for the airport check-in, which is designed to detect the bombs of Sikhs or whomever (next it will probably be Tamils). Since the Rambagh Palace Hotel is the best in Jaipur, you are probably staying there anyway. You take a huge, vaguely Art Deco room, overlooking maybe the back garden, maybe the front lawn, thick as a golf green and twice as big, with small water channels of white marble and a toad or two. The Polo Bar is just off the verandah. If you get lost in the vast building, staff will direct you.

The palace in the name is not an affectation—the Rambagh was a home (they had a number) of the maharajahs of Jaipur—and to savor the experience fully it helps to know a little about Indian princely life. The recent spate of Raj revivalism isn't much use. Most of it—*The Jewel in the Crown, A Passage to India, Gandhi*—focuses on the clash of Brits vs. Indian nationalists, taking the side of the nationalists. There is Kipling for the Brits. But the princes stand apart. They were a relic from a period of Indian independence that had passed, and an anomaly, soon abolished, in the independent India that emerged. We enjoy the relics.

There were hundreds of princely states of varying size and clout. By the terms of their accommodation to British hegemony, they surrendered foreign policy to the Viceroy, who also had the power to depose grossly incompetent rulers. Some states were smaller than counties; the grandest, Hyderabad, was larger than France, and its ruler was one of the richest men in the world (in 1939, he picked up the tab for a squadron of Hurricanes for the British war effort, besides dispatching the army of Hyderabad). Jaipur was less opulent—slightly less.

In 1976, the widow of the last maharajah of Jaipur wrote a memoir. *A Princess Remembers*, by Gayatri Devi, is available in any big Indian hotel bookstore. What saves you from envy as you read it is the simple enjoyment the author took in her fairy-tale existence. She was the granddaughter of the Gaekwar of Baroda. As a child, her favorite entertainers were the Gaekwar's trained parrots.

> They used to ride tiny silver bicycles, drive little silver cars, walk tightropes, and enact a variety of dramatic scenes. I remember one in particular in which a parrot was run over by a car, examined by a parrot doctor, and finally carried off by parrot bearers. The grand climax of their performance was always a salute fired on a tiny silver cannon. It made the most amazing noise for a miniature weapon, and the parrots were the only ones to remain unperturbed.

As a girl, she fell in love with the young ruler of Jaipur. He wooed her in Cannes and London, picking her up at the Dorchester in his Bentley. They were engaged to be married at the beginning of World War II. Her mother, foresightedly, had already bought her trousseau in Europe: ". . . sheets and towels in Florence and Czechoslovakia, shoes and matching bags at Ferragamo in Florence, nightgowns in mousseline de soie from Paris, and a host of other things. Equally typical of Ma, the trousseau had been left behind and neither she nor anyone else could remember where. Finally, it was located at the Ritz Hotel in Paris . . ."

Gayatri also got a serious, man-to-woman talk from her older brother Bhaiya:

> After a long clumsy preamble, he came to the real point of his speech: I should accept the idea that Jai was attractive to women and they to him. . . . "Just because he marries you, you can't expect him to give up all his girls". . . .
>
> "Then why shouldn't I be like that, too?" I asked resentfully, knowing that I was so besotted with Jai that I couldn't possibly think of outside flirtations.
>
> "No, No!" Bhaiya seemed almost shocked. "Girls are different!"

Her new husband was a world-class polo player, hence the name of the bar, and the polo memorabilia which decorate it. When it was a palace, of course, the Rambagh didn't need a bar. If you got thirsty, servants just fetched you something. The small room has been converted with imagination and taste. The ceiling is hung with an off-white cloth, to suggest a tent. Off-white banquettes line the walls, set with bright blue, red, and yellow pillows; a fountain trickles in the center. On the walls hang polo mallets, trophies, pictures of teams past (the Maharajah is always identified as "H. H. Jaipur"). Since you are traveling in India, you know not to take ice in your drinks; when they tell you it's made from purified water, you still don't take it—it's not purified enough. If you don't mind a

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long wait, you can order your drink on the verandah outside. At dawn, the courtyards fill with shrieking peacocks; unfortunately, they never appeared at a more seasonable hour for imbibing.

At Independence, the new Indian nation absorbed the states, but the ex-rulers retained their titles, as well as much of their prestige. In the early sixties, Gayatri Devi stood as an opposition candidate for parliament for Jaipur, which required her to spend long hours instructing illiterate constituents how to vote.

On the ballot sheet, we said over and over again, this is where the Maharani's name will appear, and next to it will be a star. But it was not as simple as that. They noticed a symbol showing a horse and rider, agreed with each other that the Maharani rides, so that must be her symbol. . . . Then they caught sight of the emblem of a flower. Ah, the flower of Jaipur—who else could it be but the Maharani? . . . All right, the star. Yes, that seems appropriate for the Maharani, but look, here is the sun. If the Maharani is a star, then the sun must mean the Maharaja. We'll vote for both.

Evidently, the coaching paid off. The Maharani beat her opponent by 175,000 votes.

The story of the Rambagh's last owners has an unhappy ending. In 1971, the Indian government, in part irked by such politicking as Gayatri's, in part obeying the egalitarian dynamic, stripped the princes of their titles and their government allowances. Gayatri Devi's husband did not live to see it. He died in England in 1970, in an accident during a polo game in Ascot Week. The Rambagh had been a hotel since 1959.

Their way of life, you may say, was doomed—doomed since it became clear that modern India, unlike Europe, would be ruled from an imperial center. Britain's Indian empire, organized on feudal lines, tolerated the princes. The current Indian empire, modeled on a democratic and socialist paradigm, could not.

Maybe it was no favor to have prolonged the princes' existence. There was something infantilizing about their quasi-independent status. What is the virtue in being a good ruler if you can be dismissed for being a bad one? The British took a class of kings, and made a class of gentlemen.

But that class too has its characteristic virtues: service, liberality, fair play in games and in life. After Jai's death, the principal of the Jaipur girl's school collected a book of tributes. Prince Philip wrote one. A palace gardener wrote the best.

His late Highness Maharaja Sawai Man Singh was born at Isarda in 1911. . . . He was very fond of playing polo, and he was one of the famous players of the world. When there was a game of polo in Jaipur, people used to come in countless numbers to see the polo and to cheer him with shouts and slogans in his praise. He also loved his people very much. He considered it his duty to help people in trouble. He never differentiated between Hindus and Muslims. When some Muslims wanted to leave Jaipur during the communal disturbances, he stopped them and told them, "No Muslim should leave Jaipur and go. They are all like the hair on my chest." The Muslims of Jaipur will never forget this.

I used to work in the gardens of this great Maharaja. The Maharani Sahiba got me admitted in the school and it is due to her kindness that I am now in the 10th class. Every summer Maharaja Sahib used to spend in England. As usual summertime came and Maharaja Sahib went to England. Who could know he will not return? He died on the polo field. The world was shocked with the news. When his body was brought to Jaipur, people thronged the route from the aerodrome to the City Palace in such a manner as if Maharaja Sahib would speak on seeing them. People were crying—if we had known that our Maharaja would not return, we would never have allowed him to go.

We should all earn such an obit.

When you order your last gin and tonic in Jai's house, lift it in his memory. ☐

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BOOK REVIEWS

MIAMI
Joan Didion/Simon and Schuster/$17.95

GOING TO MIAMI: EXILES, TOURISTS AND REFUGEES IN THE NEW AMERICA
David Rieff/Little, Brown/$16.95

Roger Starr

Who has not felt like an explorer when the airplane makes landfall just north of Surfside and the monster hotels sculpted from durable soap begin to take shape along the beach? Still a resort at first glance, Miami has become as well a frontier city, a port of entry, an airline hub, a manufacturing city, a business city, an old people's colony, a black city, a smuggler's cove, the most prosperous Cuban city in the world, a sports center, and a refuge from persecution, cold weather, and, some insist, from reality. It pines for a biographer/annotator/evaluator with tape recorder, good eyes, and enough experience to shuck hyperbole of praise and quasi-Calvinist contempt and give us a true accounting.

Now come two Miami books designed not to tell us where best to eat stone crabs and how to get from the Doral Country Club (a hotel) to Coral Gables (a venerable subdivision, as Miami counts its age, in the high Spanish style of Addison Mizner). Each tells us instead what to feel about Miami and how to value those sensations. Those premises should make a good start, and both books offer interesting reading, but each misses the proper balance point, essential in a truly great travel book, between what we are told about the place and what about the author.

In Joan Didion's *Miami* and David Rieff's *Going to Miami*, the authors' interest in themselves absorbs the reader's attention just when he wants to know more about the city and its people. Not that the authors resemble each other in the nature of their introspection. Didion uses her carefully crafted and lovingly polished prose as an enameled lorgnette through which she disapprovingly notes the extent to which the generality of people fall short of her standards of manners and virtues. One wonders what exquisite exemplar of good manners could possibly score even a C on her virtue test, and vice versa. Rieff, on the other hand, distracts our eyes from the streets with a morals test that he repeatedly gives himself. An enthusiastic on-the-spot fellow-traveler of Castroism, as late as seven years after it had exposed itself in power, he wants to be sure his present loss of enthusiasm for the regime has not imbued him with the mean-spirited priggishness that he believes to be a trait of most (read "all") opponents of anti-capitalist movements of insurrection.

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Let us turn to the Didion book first. In it, the author effectively limits her account of Miami to the Cubans in the city, and among Cubans she singles out those active in politics. When she speaks of politics she does not mean participation by Cubans in the political life of Miami itself, although, incidentally, Xavier Suarez, present Mayor of Miami, was born in Cuba and came to Miami, like many others, as a refugee from Castroism.

The politics that interest her are the politics of *la lucha*, the struggle to retake the Cuban government from Fidel Castro. Like many who have fled homelands at different stages of the evolution of tyrannies that engulfed them, Cuban groups and individual refugees left at different times for different reasons. Their rejections of Castro started from positions as diverse as rage at his attack on the Batista regime and fervent support of his insurrection even after he had taken power. Consequently, present opponents of Castro pursue divergent strategies aimed at different goals and sometimes regard each other as more dangerous enemies than Castro himself. They surely are more conveniently located to confront each other than to assault their common enemy. All claim to be equally determined to bring down Castro, but they do not necessarily agree on why they despise his regime and surely not on the rhetorical question of what kind of government they would choose to replace his.

These differences and the consequent internecine bitterness and bloodshed fascinate Didion as though they were somehow uniquely Miamian. It is difficult for the reader to share her concentration, or even to absorb the details

necessary to make it interesting. While she is an incisive interviewer with access to many factional leaders, not even she can plant in the head of the casual reader their damnably foreign-sounding names, to say nothing of the political differences between them. The book is not sufficiently detailed to serve as a clear historical record of the complicated struggles of Cuban exiles in Miami to return to their homeland, probably for the very good reason that the author herself is not sufficiently interested in that limited aspect of the subject to write such a book and correctly assumes that her readers would not be sufficiently patient to read it if she were. Didion herself has a much bigger fish to fry: the United States government.

Didion's readers are presumably interested in the author herself and in Miami, the city of their dreams, the "rich and wicked pastel boomtown." That, she points out, is what they have been watching on a highly colored and resoundingly orchestrated television series called "Miami Vice." It is interesting that she should refer to that program even though it never deals with Miami's Cubans and their political struggle to oust Castro.

Some suspicious watchers of "Miami Vice" have speculated that its producers came to Miami by way of Washington where they may have passed some time in the Institute for Policy Studies, a left-wing think tank. That might explain why, every so often, the bad guys on "Miami Vice" turn out not to be cocaine traffickers or kidnappers but U.S. government employees, agents of the FBI, the Drug Enforcement Agency, or an unnamed covert official body. Their crimes are political. They are trying to block Central American good guys from ridding themselves of the nasty dictators to whom Washington adheres. The better-dressed Miami cops heroically seek to frustrate the wicked federal officers and, in the best tradition, they either win or lose gallantly.

Joan Didion also traces a connection between Washington and crimes in Miami. She believes that some violent confrontations between Cuban factions in Miami originated in Washington, as the American government tried to turn the Cuban exiles' plight to its own foreign policy purposes.

One difference between the book and the TV series is the intense concen-

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tration of which Didion is capable. She begins her book with references to the native Miami black population, featuring an account of two major black riots brought on by a brutal racist killing by real-life Miami policemen and their subsequent acquittal. But from those introductory remarks to the end of the book, Didion's Miami might as well have been emptied of its black population. The book does briefly, though repeatedly, point to nasty, xenophobic "Anglos" and their ethnic bumper stickers that bear the slogan: WILL THE LAST AMERICAN TO LEAVE MIAMI PLEASE BRING THE FLAG. Of their way of life we are told little.

Anglos are Miami residents who settled in Dade County before the post-Castro "invasion" or came later but speak English as their native tongue or else with an accent other than Hispanic. They almost universally detest or patronize Cubans, Didion tells us, and fail to read the social notes printed in Spanish in the *Miami Herald.* Whatever the extent of the jingoism that, even in South Florida, can only be called "Yankee," persistent anti-Hispanic prejudice only makes more remarkable the commercial achievements of the Cuban exiles and their successes in local politics. And makes their presence ever more galling to the blacks. The blacks have had to watch income of Cubans in America (which means mostly in Miami) grow until it is now four times as large as the entire current GNP of the island they left (according to George Gilder, writing in the December issue of *TAS*) while the blacks' position in Miami hardly changed except, perhaps, for the worse.

While blacks are largely ignored in the Didion book except when really atrocious white behavior stimulates them to riot, and while Anglos are condemned for their bigotry, the reader might expect that Didion would view Cubans with sympathy. Even if their economic progress were a matter of indifference to her, she should be able to find a certain pathos in their having left their island to make their way in a strange environment, cut off by *force majeure* from their own memories of home. If she does feel such compassion, the author drowns sentiment in the majestic sniff of her prose. A sample, characteristic for its tone:

> Almost any day it was possible to drive past the limestone arches and fountains which marked the boundaries of Coral Gables and see little girls being photographed in the tiaras and ruffled hoop skirts and maribou-trimmed illusion capes they would wear at their *quinces*, the elaborate fifteenth birthday parties at which the community's female children came of official age. The favored facial expression for a *quince* photograph was a classic smolder. The favored backdrop was one suggesting Castilian grandeur, which was how the Coral Gables arches happened to figure. Since the idealization of the virgin implicit in the *quince* could exist only in the presence of its natural foil, *machismo*, there was often a brother around, or a boyfriend. There was also a mother, in dark glasses, not only to protect the symbolic virgin but to point out the better angle, the more aristocratic location.

The author could more gently and accurately have described Coral Gables architecture as a Cuban mother's allusion to Havana, not Castile, and to see in her posing of her daughter an understandable effort to mend a broken link to the family's abandoned culture. In a small voice, the passage echoes the tone of the book as a whole. The author's white gloves are run gracefully over any bit of furniture she finds, Castilian or Federalist, and they come away with dirt, dirt everywhere.

It's really dirt the author is interested in, not Miami or its Anglos, blacks, or even Cubans, and most of the dirt that interests her leads from Miami to Washington. She suggests that Washington, driven by the American spirit, is guilty of encouraging the Bay of Pigs invasion of Castroland, of not supporting the Bay of Pigs invasion when it finally happened, of encouraging Cubans to believe that the route to Havana runs through San Salvador, Managua, Grenada, or even the Watergate apartments, and of failing, when those roads were blown up, to support the Cuban victims.

Some of these criticisms are valid, and yet they will seem just mainly to readers who started out believing what Joan Didion believes. If I read her right, she believes that foreign policy is simple, but made to seem complicated by bad people, largely American, who hope to benefit by enhancing their political power behind the confusion they create.

The reality, as aging teaches us, is always more complicated. Always it is too easy, after a failure like the Bay of Pigs, to suggest that the other alternative to the course chosen would have been the correct one. In the face of the wild anger that would have been stimulated in the Cuban exile community by a Washington effort to block the invasion (there was no middle ground for the U.S. government—it was forced either to encourage or discourage the invasion because it could not pretend that the exiles it had welcomed were not thinking of such a move), would Joan Didion have acknowledged the anti-invasion course to be the right one, or would she have criticized it as she has the course actually taken? I don't know, nor, I think, does she. But uncertainty is not one of her burdens; she is secure in the belief that Washington is always responsible when things go wrong, because it is prevented from finding a good answer to its international problems by its own insistence on expedience and its lack of grace in the use of limitless strength.

That attitude resembles a child's faith in a male parent's power more than a serious adult's appraisal of the awesome problems and ambiguities of foreign policy. And its immaturity argues for the proposition that a travel book should stick to the subject.

In *Going to Miami*, David Rieff has produced a lively account of an indeterminate number of trips by air from New York to South Florida. His book, in contrast to Joan Didion's, does not allow Cuban Miami to stand as a metaphor for the city as a whole. Though he spends the larger part of the book on that Cuban community, he pays serious attention also to the native blacks and especially to the pitiful refugees who arrived in Miami from Haiti as the Duvalier regime in that country neared its climactic end. He also finds time to discuss the Jewish communities of Miami and Miami Beach and to suggest that there is more to Miami than the politics of a Cuban *risorgimento.*

Rieff is a witty and perceptive writer who has long been interested in Cuba and Cubans, and what he pastes together in *Going to Miami* is an impressionistic set of overlapping views of the city as it appears to a rather self-conscious New Yorker. He describes himself as a "West Side latchkey kid," which may be technically accurate but conveys a rather different impression from what one would suppose after finding out that his mother is Susan Sontag and his father Philip Rieff, author of *The Triumph of Therapy.*

More in the pursuit of political affinity than a simple desire to know more about Cubans, Rieff visited Cuba in 1968 and celebrated New Year's Eve there. He admits he should have been more suspicious about the Cuban claim to be in the process of creating the "New Man" which suggests that he, like many others of us, regards his own early political enthusiasms as somewhat embarrassing. A few sentences further on, Rieff hastens to plead in gratuitous extenuation of his adolescent self (he was 16 in 1968) not exactly that the American regimes that began and deepened the nation's military involvement in Vietnam were morally equivalent to the Castro regime, but that the war was "every bit the obscenity we thought it was," while Cuba was actually no worse than "militarism with a human (even a sexy) face."

How, indeed, can the Vietnam war be "every bit" as horrible as that nonspecific "we" believed, now that we (an all-inclusive "we") know that North Vietnam was no more than Castro's Cuba the trustworthy hope of "New Men," that its goal was simply the conquest and capture of the South by whatever means, and that the perilous escape of many thousands of boat people and the death of many thousands more bear witness to the horror with which ordinary people, as well as the leaders of that country, sensibly viewed their captors?

These arguments are not so much addressed to the merits of Rieff's political views about Vietnam, but to his introduction of them in a book about Miami. It is absurd for a grown man to believe that he owes the world an apology for his political allegiances at the age of 16, any more than for any of the other notions or bits of behavior which he would no longer consent to be caught dead indulging. If Rieff is as anxious not to be taken for an American super-patriot at 35 as he is not to be taken for having remained a committed Castroite because he was one at age 16, he should set forth his present views and his 16-year-old views with equal clarity. I want to hear neither; what I want is the author's description of modern Miami and I will be content to decipher his political position all on my own.

Rieff refers more often than Didion to the "Miami Vice" television show. Must everything about Miami be rendered in the exciting colors and sounds of the series if it is to sustain audience attention? The answer may well be "yes." The city's location, a subject that both our authors regard as more important politically than climatically, probably makes a pallid "earth-colored" Miami unrecognizable. (Rieff tells the reader that the producers of "Vice" deliberately avoid that palette in the series.)

The central fact in determining the character of modern Miami is that it represents the south to North Americans at the same time that it represents the north to South and Central Americans. To the inhabitants of

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a northern region, the south is characterized by passion and languor unknown in the chill and repression of their normal surroundings. Even if the specific city that embodies those troubling and alluring qualities is southern only in a relative sense, its psychic attraction remains strong. Aschenbach, protagonist in Thomas Mann's *Death in Venice*, regards Venice (roughly 300 miles north of New York City) as the quintessential southern city because it is far south of Germany. Inevitably he meets his romantic obsession and his death there. The story is the fruit of Mann's continuing fascination with the conflicting northern and southern strains in the German psyche.

In the real Miami, the impression of southernness on American authors who write about it is intensified for the simplest of reasons: the climatic difference between it and the northern regions from which they come is real and not a mere figment of the difference of latitude demonstrated on a map. The seasonal difference between day and night in Miami is much smaller than in the major cities to the North; the tides rise and fall much less; the water is saltier; the vegetation, more tropical. Its surrounding waters are richer in species of fish, aquatic mammals, birds, plant life. When a plane door opens, and the visitor steps out into a different climate, he senses the difference instantly and assumes that because the city is very different from anything he has known in his homeland it is also more exotic.

Short-term visitors remember the difference during the whole of their stay; long-term residents, aided by the ubiquitous air-conditioning and the homogenization of the continental culture, learn that exoticism wears off.

For the new arrivals from the South, Miami, that Northern city, is a place not only for exile but for liberation, not only from the compression imposed on the middle class in Hispanic societies, but from the languor of the islands of the Caribbean. The progress of the middle-class Cubans expelled by Castro would have been a much slower process in their homeland even if, improbably, a new order in Cuba had indeed made more room for a middle class between the sugar and tobacco aristocracy and the peasantry. Anyone who demeans the energy and grit that Cubans in Miami have demonstrated in adapting to American commercial life, to auto repair and a dozen other technologies and strange forms of enterprise, is probably overemphasizing the importance of their political interests. Yes, some have been killed in pursuing those interests; but not a few participants became involved so deeply to relieve the pangs of exile with what they found a distractingly dangerous sport.

Both books at hand overlook the city's offerings to middle-class families, the unexciting but ever-present opportunities for vacation, the accessible year-round outdoors, the convenient life-style. Surely the city has exaggerated its own boosterism. It has built a disgracefully underutilized rapid transit system whose failure has had a depressing effect on mass transit finance throughout the country. It is true that Addison Mizner, the architect who set much of Miami's colonial Spanish style, was a huckster and that Miami Beach was built and sold by hucksters. Frank Lloyd Wright was also a huckster: look on his works.

Rieff is more accurate than Didion in describing the recent banking of the political fires among the factions engaged in *la lucha* and even more accurate still when, in a tone of astonishment, he suggests that a home of one's own on one's own land is not really so bad a pattern of living. Miami is not a second Boston—indeed modern Boston is not in that sense a second Boston—and it is probably the only city in the nation in which you can catch a bonefish against a backdrop of business skyscrapers, but it is an American city, and the really important question is: what's that? □

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THE LAST INTELLECTUALS: AMERICAN CULTURE IN THE AGE OF ACADEME

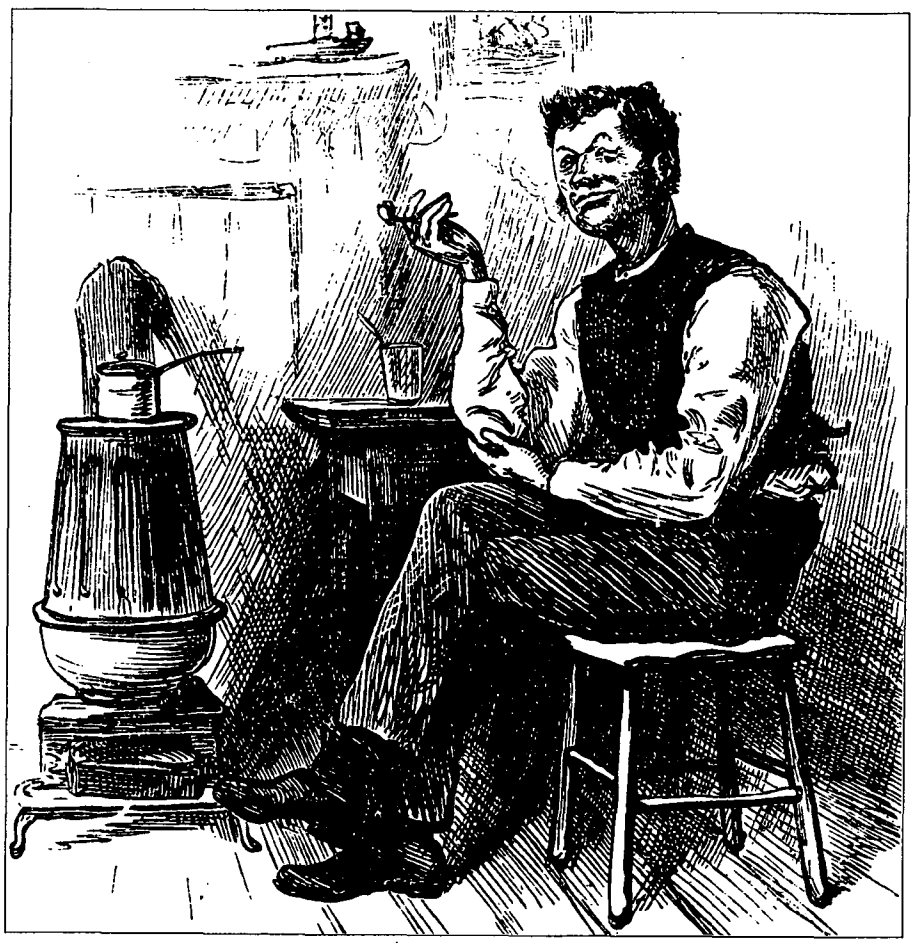
Russell Jacoby/Basic Books/$18.95

Mark Falcoff

Russell Jacoby has noticed something about the United States worth writing a book about—the growth of university communities whose intellectual products are basically irrelevant to the broader cultural issues facing our society. Or, stated inversely, the increasing dispersion of intellectual life to an archipelago of university towns which, for reasons of geography alone, cannot hope to play the role of the New York intellectual scene of the 1930s and 1940s.

His book is not about the disappearance of intellectuals as such, then, but about what he sees as the passing of a certain *kind* of intellectual—one who can write in the language of public discourse, and raise basic issues in wider public forums. According to him, the only people now capable of doing this are neoconservatives, a tiny, corrupt, and even malevolent minority (many of them Jews, by the way) who have sold out to right-wing foundations and the Reagan Administration. There are plenty of left-wing, even Marxist intellectuals out there—not merely in large university centers like Madison, Ann Arbor, and Berkeley, but also at community colleges in Detroit, St. Louis, and Kalamazoo—but, as he explains, the peculiar circumstances attending their concentration in the academy has tended to neuter them politically. "Radical sociologists may dream of revolution," he writes, "but they bank on their profession. Professionalization also spells privatization, a withdrawal from the larger public universe. . . . For many professors in many universities, academic freedom meant nothing more than the freedom to be academic."

Mark Falcoff is a visiting fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations.



Now, there is something about this description which will immediately strike a note of familiarity with anyone who has spent time at an American university during the last twenty or so years. It puts its finger, also, upon one of the fundamental differences between academic life in continental Europe and this country. In the former, universities tend to be located in major cities; consequently, there is a constant interpenetration between the professoriat and other leadership groups in the society. In the United States, however, rustication is the order of the day—producing isolation, alienation, and (if Jacoby is right) impotence. Finally, *The Last Intellectuals* underlines certain important changes in American life since World War II as they affect the cultural scene, particularly the growth of suburbs and the decline of city-centers, hence, the passing of "bohemia." No more cheap rents, inexpensive restaurants, all night bookshops, ready gathering places for an independent intelligentsia. Instead, there is the office in a modern skyscraper rather incongruously situated on the prairie, a reserved parking place across the street, a scruffy ranch house, a single "gourmet" restaurant, and the fleshpots of urban life anywhere from two to ten driving hours away.[1] As Jacoby says, "a spectre is haunting American universities, or at least, its faculties: boredom."

This subterranean discontent might surface, reconnecting with public life. Conservatives suspect and fear this; hence, they continuously rail against what they imagine as the threat from the universities. I think they are wrong. I hope they are right.

Jacoby's contribution is to document, with considerable accuracy and verve, the state of the American academy today, and its relationship—or rather, its disconnection—with intellectual life broadly speaking. It is certainly true, for example, that just about the last thing you can ever expect to hear at an academic dinner table in this country is a serious conversation about books and ideas. In my twelve years before the mast—first at Champaign-Urbana, Illinois, and subsequently in Eugene, Oregon—I can recall exactly one such evening, and our hosts ended up rather embarrassed by it all, as if instead of ranging rather widely on a series of public issues, their guests had brought up the finer points of incest or necrophilia.

It is self-evident that most of the really important intellectual discussions in this country are taking place in magazines, not "learned" journals; we all know (or have known) the academic for whom the high point in any fortnight is the arrival of the *New York Review of Books*. Most American academics neither can nor wish to write in readable English prose; it is not a skill in which they were trained, and they are certainly not about to pick it up along the way. (In graduate school I was frequently criticized by my confrères for "writing like a journalist.") Though conservatives do, as Jacoby says, worry about what is being taught in universities, perhaps their concerns are overwrought; according to frequent reports in the press, most students these days are mainly interested in getting out of school as expeditiously as possible and making lots of money; if that is so, they cannot possibly be much impressed with their professors, whose ideas and interests have only gotten them this far.

[1]There is a ghastly British equivalent known as the "new" (or "glass and poured concrete") university. It has found its fictional archetype in Malcolm Bradbury's *The History Man* (London, 1975).

The problem with *The Last Intellectuals* is that it doesn't stop at description, but ventures into thickets of analysis, where the author often loses his way. Though he has taught at a number of American universities, Jacoby's grasp of the wider trends in our cultural life seems uncertain—which, given his own frame of reference, may not be so illogical. With all its merits, this book is in many ways nothing but an excuse for its author to vent his spleen against neoconservatives, but also against the academic left, which he sees as too self-centered and self-satisfied to work for radical social change. "The world," he tells us with a perfectly straight face, "is slithering toward nuclear disaster, global pollution, and starvation, but one Marxist critic writing on another brightly trades in Marxist academic futures." Where, he asks, are the C. Wright Mills's of today and tomorrow? Where, indeed.

The truth is that there are plenty of "public intellectuals" around these days, but most of them are neoconservatives. Jacoby makes much of the generational factor—as if Irving Kristol, Daniel Bell, Norman Podhoretz, and others are something of an endangered species. But, as he himself notes, the journals they have led, particularly *Commentary* and the *Public Interest*, have been unusually open to new contributors. Thus—bad news, Mr. Jacoby—there is a whole new crop coming along, including Nick Eberstadt, Joshua Muravchik, Scott McConnell, David Gress, Bruce Bawer, Mary Tedeschi, Mark Lilla, Roger Kaplan, Suzanne Garment, Terry Teachout, Daniel Pipes, Eliot Cohen, Stephen Schwartz, Fernanda Eberstadt, Carol Iannone, and many, many others, a few under thirty, many under forty, and all under fifty.[2]

Again, as Jacoby points out, Kristol himself has been something of a one-man employment agency for dozens of younger neoconservatives (myself included). But he misses the point, which is that the chief recruiting ground for this movement is largely dissident academics, or people who in other ages would have gone on to become so—men and women who are bored with

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university life, tired of expressing their ideas in a fog of jargon, and sick of paying tribute to a Marxism in which they no longer believe (if indeed they ever did). The price, indeed, of being a public intellectual in the United States is very nearly to leave academia altogether, a decision which —given the salary and general environment—is not as difficult as it once might have been. In all too many cases, the only thing one must give up is the notion that the opinion of one's colleagues is more important than the truth, or common sense, or even self-respect. In academic life, as it used to be said about the Congress, "to get along, you have to go along."

It is fascinating, by way of contrast, to read Jacoby's version of the plight of academic freedom in American universities today. On one hand, he fully concedes that the McCarthyite nightmare is quite over; that Marxists are tenured and heavily entrenched in the system; that most academics are, in fact, left-of-center, some decidedly so. However, there is still a threat. We "all know," he writes, of "cases of teachers forced out, not because they were imperfect professionals, but because they were something more: public intellectuals and radicals." Actually, what many of us know is that most academic Marxists have no difficulty sailing through to tenure; that most conservatives have trouble even getting hired; and that those few leftists who have failed to obtain tenure have had to be grossly deficient in their professional life—some have failed to make the grade because they chose to test the civility of academic life beyond its furthest limits. (It would be interesting to know where Jacoby would put the case of Northwestern University professor Barbara Foley, who violently disrupted a meeting where Adolfo Calero, leader of the Nicaraguan resistance, was supposed to speak.[3])

Jacoby hints darkly that the arcane language of much of contemporary social science is due to the need to mask radical thought from funding agencies. Actually, however, anyone vaguely familiar with the foundation world—or, for that matter, even certain branches and extensions of the U.S. government—knows that this is very far from the case. Moreover, many granting bodies, such as the Social Science Research Council, are dominated by boards of academics who take care of each other, or each other's protégés—in a personal as well as ideological sense. The real reason why so many academics write in unreadable prose is much simpler to explain: this is the way they have been taught to write; this is the way their mentors and other Olympians of their field tend to write; those who judge their work also write thusly; indeed, in no other way could their work be considered "serious." The fact that many are Marxists is purely incidental to this fact. Insofar as any political agenda is at work, it is very different from the one Jacoby suggests. If our Marxist academics actually began to write in plain English, they would reveal their public purposes; these in turn would be rejected by American society outright. Better to confine one's activities to "theory building," or raising money for the guerrillas in El Salvador (or both), and wait for better days (when the intelligentsia and the masses finally speak the same language).

Jacoby also misses an essential point about American university life. During the sixties one of the war cries of the campus left was "Power to the people!" If actually applied literally at that time, however, it would have enthroned not the New Left but George Wallace. Since the defeat of McGovern in 1972, the academic left has retreated to a defensive perimeter where, by redefining the boundaries, they can wholly control the environment. *There* the "people" are now in power; the price which they have had to pay, however, is a decreased relevance to American society. To be sure, not everyone in the academy considers this cost excessive; it is Jacoby who is dissatisfied. His notion of a public intellectual is a left-wing intellectual, and he is right to note that there is no evident successor-generation to replace the Irving Howes and the Alfred Kazins. Again, however, this lack may not be felt by those for whom the principal objective is ideological hegemony in a restricted space,

[2]The high incidence of Jews in the neoconservative movement elicits some remarkably vicious comments from Jacoby, which suggest deep-seated grudges or envies —or both. Referring to the senior generation of Jewish neoconservatives (Kristol, Podhoretz, Hook, Glazer, etc.), he asks, "Is it possible that Jewish intellectuals visited radicalism, while more non-Jewish intellectuals stayed the winter? Is it possible that a solid American background provided more sustenance for the long haul rather than the immigrant past common to many of the Jews? . . . Did the radicalism steeped in anxiety slide into conservatism, while the Texan, Puritan, or Scottish identities of Mills or Wilson or Vidal or Galbraith gave rise to a bony radicalism more resistant to economic and social blandishments?" One cannot help wondering if Jacoby is aware of the snobbery and self-hatred he has betrayed here. Moreover, if "economic and social blandishments" rather than principle were the cause of the present views of the Jewish neoconservatives, one must then ask, who are (or were) hotter commercial properties? Norman Podhoretz and Sidney Hook? Or Gore Vidal, Edmund Wilson, and John Kenneth Galbraith? And who would be more likely to receive an honorary degree from an Ivy League university? The issue raised by Jacoby is not in itself irrelevant; no doubt Jews in the final analysis have more reason to appreciate the United States than, say, Edmund Wilson, who opposed U.S. participation in both world wars, and who ended his life believing he was too good for this country; or Gore Vidal, who derives a sense of self-esteem from poking fun at our most sacred institutions. But to suggest that their "bony radicalism" arises from a higher sense of moral purpose—particularly in the case of Vidal—is as far from the truth as it is possible to go.

[3]For this breach of academic citizenship Professor Foley was denied tenure by the Northwestern administration, over the protests of the vast majority of her colleagues, who saw nothing wrong in throwing red paint on Mr. Calero and inciting a riot which caused the cancellation of his talk. See Joseph Epstein, "A Case of Academic Freedom," *Commentary*, September 1986.

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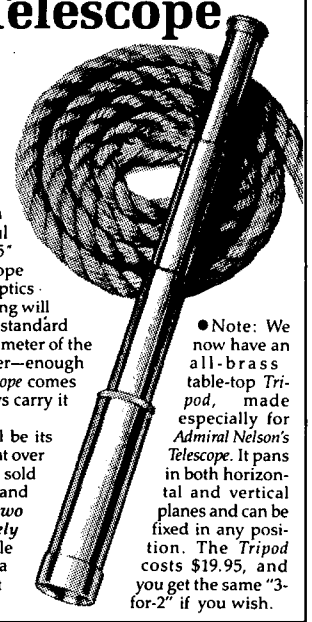

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rather than a more diffuse (and problematic) cultural influence in the society at large.

Books that deplore the passing of an age always make one wonder if things were really so golden in times of old. How good were the "public intellectuals" of the 1930s and 1940s? Is C. Wright Mills—who ended his life as an apologist for Castro—really the paradigm of a committed intellectual? Above all, was New York so inexpensive fifty years ago, taking into account what people earned? Edmund Wilson's diaries for the 1930s and 1940s are full of worries about money, and he, after all, was one of the most productive writers of his time, who never had difficulty placing his articles.

Further, things may not be quite as bad today as Jacoby makes out. Not every contemporary academic has dropped out of the public discourse—the names of James Tuttleton, or Kenneth S. Lynn, or Robert H. Ferrell, or Joseph Epstein immediately come to mind, as do Richard Pipes, Irving Louis Horowitz, and James Q. Wilson. What is new is the think tank–cum-magazine, which has made possible the re-urbanization of a new intellectual class. Many of these are in Washington, D.C.—the American Enterprise Institute, the Cato Institute, the Brookings Institution—but some are not. There is the Institute for Contemporary Studies in San Francisco, the Manhattan Institute in New York, and a host of institutions set up to study specific issues relating to individual states of the union, usually located in important regional centers. There are magazines like the *Public Interest/National Interest*, which are soon to be relocated in one center in Washington, but also the *New Criterion* and *Grand Street* in New York and the *Atlantic* in Boston. And, of course, there is the *New Republic*, produced in Washington but owned (and edited) by Martin Peretz, who lives in Cambridge.

Apart from being located in large metropolitan centers, these institutions have something else in common. Their intellectuals face outward; instead of continually bouncing off each other like academics, they carry on dialogue with an ever-changing cast of characters, many of whom are not themselves intellectuals. This not only forces them to speak the language of daily life, but makes them more sensitive to the realities of the everyday world. They are also free from the pressures of peers to conform, since they do not live in the asphyxiating environment of the university town. Small wonder so few are leftists. But it is academia, not intellectual life, which is in trouble in America. That is the book that Jacoby started to write, and one wishes he had tried to finish. □

LAST LETTERS: PRISONS AND PRISONERS OF THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

Olivier Blanc/Farrar, Straus and Giroux/$22.50

William McGurn

"France is nothing but a great scaffold in which the strong kill off the weak in the name of the law." So wrote a health officer named Dufresne in June 1793 to friends in Santo Domingo. It was an imprudent correspondence during the Terror, one that would ultimately cost him his head, condemned for spreading "counter-revolutionary propaganda." Almost two centuries later his last thoughts and those of others like him have been collected and published as *Last Letters: Prisons and Prisoners of the French Revolution.*

As this book makes amply clear, the "crimes" that saw these unfortunates sent to the scaffold ranged from writing to "persons abroad" to trying to hold onto their possessions to just being in the wrong place at the wrong time. Olivier Blanc, a French historian, discovered these 153 notes and letters—some dashed off but moments before their authors were carted off to the guillotine—in the Archives Nationales, stuck into the files of the Paris Revolutionary Tribunal with no apparent rhyme or reason. Often eloquent, frequently moving, the bulk of these impassioned farewells have never been published before. Nor, as the author sadly relates, were most ever read by their intended recipients.

The letters do not lend themselves to easy generalization about either the condemned or the nature of their crimes. Many of the crimes, for example, were financial: people trying to get around the financial decrees of the Revolutionary government by taking advantage of obscure loopholes. Nor do the prisoners themselves fall into definitive categories. Some were undoubtedly bona fide partisans of the ancien régime. Others, such as our friend Dufresne, were people who didn't know how to keep their mouths shut. Still others were genuine revolutionaries who'd somehow fallen out with their *confrères*; one suspects that the Terror saw a good many personal scores settled in the name of revolutionary justice.

The reactions of each of these people are similarly varied, although a certain fearlessness, or at least resignation, is common enough to merit notice. Some believed they would be vindicated by history: "The future will justify me in the opinion of just men and true Republicans," wrote Frederic de Dietrich, mayor of Strasbourg. Others were philosophic: "The events in which I find myself caught up will probably spare me the inconveniences of old age," wrote Antoine-Laurent de Lavoisier, a famous French chemist and member of the Academy of Sciences. A good number found solace in religion, like the Comtesse de Trojoliff:

> Farewell, my poor friend, do not regret me, I die with trust and almost with joy. At what a fine banquet I shall be at this evening, my friend, I shall await you there; your virtues call you there. I have nothing with which to reproach myself in my conduct towards mankind, I have never had any but feelings of humanity, I sincerely wish the happiness of those who have brought me to the grave; but towards God, my friend, I was not so innocent; I loved Him, but served Him ill. I hope that He will forgive me; so let my friends not weep over my happiness, we shall all be together ere long . . .

Among the most graceful is the letter sent by Marie-Antoinette to her sister-in-law, where the former queen displays a nobility of spirit more alien to her captors than her high birth. In this particular section she also touched on the charges of incest with her eight-year-old son, which the boy repeated at the trial without understanding what he was saying:

> May my son never forget his father's last words, which I repeat to him now: let him never seek to avenge our death. I have to say one thing that is very painful to my heart. I know how much that child must have caused you pain; forgive him, my dear sister; think of his age and how easy it is to make a child say whatever one wishes, and even things that he does not understand; the day will come, I hope, when he will feel all the more the value of your care and your kindness to us both.

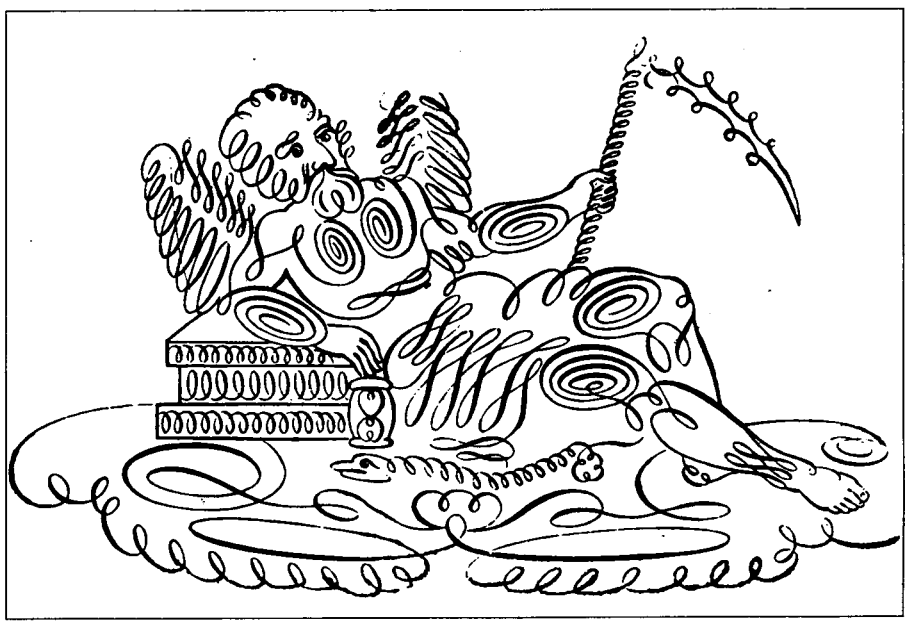
Indeed, one of the more remarkable aspects of these letters is the large percentage that do express forgiveness for those who have cost the authors their lives. These appear with such frequency that it is refreshing finally to come across a man who was bitter and did not hesitate to say so, again the unfortunate Monsieur Dufresne, writing to the man who'd denounced him:

> I take my eternal farewell of you, villain. I don't know whether you did it on purpose. Though I knew you for a scoundrel, I cannot bring myself to believe that you are also a wicked villain. All I can say is that it is the letters I wrote to you that have brought me to the scaffold. If it was not wickedness, your turn will come soon enough.

Many letters, too, include snippets of advice and a list of debts still outstanding. There is even one charming testimonial to *la difference*, written by the Comte Beugnot. While noting that the male and female prisoners in the Conciergerie were separated by an iron fence, he pointed out that the bars "were not so close together that a Frenchman should ever have reason to despair."

Like any good drama *Last Letters* is not without a villain, the public prosecutor, Antoine-Quentin Fouquier-Tinville. Never does he speak directly, though his shadow hovers over every word. It is to his sense of justice the in-

William McGurn is deputy editorial page editor of the Asian Wall Street Journal.



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nocent appeal for clemency and understanding; to him prisoners offer damning evidence about their fellows in hopes of escaping their sentence; in his files the last letters of the condemned come to rest after being intercepted by the court, undelivered, perhaps even unread. Throughout it all his finger points unflinchingly to the guillotine, unmoved by any sense of pity.

Not surprisingly Fouquier-Tinville was himself to feel the guillotine blade when events turned on him. In his rise and fall is the rough paradigm of the totalitarian monster who has come to torment our own century: the faceless bureaucrat who decides life or death not on the basis of what people have done but simply for who they are. In Fouquier-Tinville's own last letter, addressed to his wife, he explains his role with an irony that doubtless escaped him. "I shall die for serving my country with too much zeal, too much application, and for carrying out all the government's wishes, my hands and heart free of all blame," he wrote. Like so many that he sent to the scaffold, he enclosed a locket of his hair. As with those others, too, this last gesture of remembrance would never reach its intended destination.

At the outset Olivier Blanc declares that it was his intention "to let the documents and facts speak for themselves," and by and large he is successful in that. He is less successful in the introduction to each case, where he tries to provide some background on the accused. The confusion here suggests a rushed translation into English, not necessarily a bad one but one that is not always clear because it also fails to explain those details which might be common knowledge to a French readership but need to be fleshed out for a foreign one. In this regard putting the events of these individuals within the larger chronology of the French Revolution itself would have greatly enhanced the work; Fouquier-Tinville's downfall, for example, is flat without it. In short, Blanc would have been well served by a bit of Anglo-Saxon packaging.

Yet the book's corresponding virtue is the author's recognition that the letters are themselves so full of life that it is best to keep them ever in the foreground. His particular achievement here is thus to have rescued the human from the historic, to demonstrate that even while drawing their last breaths on earth men and women will continue to be men and women, with all the contradictions that implies, full of humor, pathos, and charity, as well as an undeniable reserve of fortitude that probably surprised even them. Almost two centuries after they set these emotions to paper, they finally have an audience that appreciates them. □

THE LONG PEACE: INQUIRIES INTO THE HISTORY OF THE COLD WAR

John Lewis Gaddis/Oxford University Press/$24.95

Joseph Shattan

In the preface to his 1982 study, *Strategies of Containment*, John Lewis Gaddis took his fellow diplomatic historians to task for their lack of interest in the role of ideas. "In their fascination with regional, topical or bureaucratic approaches," he wrote, "they have paid curiously little attention" to the intellectual framework underlying American foreign policy. By contrast, Gaddis approaches diplomatic history almost as though it were a branch of intellectual history. His determination "to recapture what was in the minds of Western leaders" by patiently digging through the archives has made him one of the outstanding diplomatic historians of our day.

Unfortunately, the area that Professor Gaddis has made his specialty, Soviet-American relations, is one in which knowing what went on in the minds of Western policy-makers is insufficient; one has to know something about what the men in the Kremlin were up to, as well. Indeed, a good part of the fascination of Soviet-American relations derives from the interplay of two political cultures with radically different goals, outlooks, and methods. But while Gaddis is a sensitive and imaginative student of American diplomatic history, his knowledge of Soviet affairs leaves much to be desired.

The strengths and weaknesses of John Lewis Gaddis as a historian of postwar diplomacy are well reflected in his most recent collection of essays, *The Long Peace*. Those essays dealing solely with the evolution of American views and strategies are generally superb; they leave the reader with the unmistakable sensation of sailing in first-class historical waters. But then Gaddis shifts his attention to Soviet matters, and suddenly the reader is left stranded in some murky tributary of the social sciences, where facile analogies replace insight, and the clichés of "game theory" and "systems analysis" substitute for thought.

As an example of Gaddis at his best, consider his essay, "Dividing Adversaries: The United States and International Communism, 1945-1958." Here, Gaddis sets out to demolish the widely held view that American policy-makers in the postwar period, bemused by their belief in the "monolithic" nature of international Communism, failed to detect—let alone exploit—the emerging rift in Sino-Soviet relations. In reality, Gaddis argues, American diplomacy was far more sophisticated than is commonly recognized. "Despite what they said in public," he writes, "American policy-makers at no point during the postwar era actually believed in the existence of an international Communist monolith." On the contrary, even before the conquest of the Chinese mainland, they assumed that a Sino-Soviet rift was not only likely, but inevitable.

This conviction sprung from three sources: a healthy respect for the enduring reality of Chinese nationalism and xenophobia, which, it was felt, would make China's Communist leadership increasingly reluctant to subordinate its interests to Moscow's; a contempt for the brutal character of Stalinist diplomacy, which could be relied upon to alienate even the closest of Soviet sympathizers; and the encouraging example of Tito's defiance of Stalin, which seemed to raise the prospect of "Chinese Titoism" emerging in the not too distant future.

Thus it happened that in 1949 President Truman authorized a policy of seeking "to exploit through political and economic means any rifts between the Chinese Communists and the USSR and between the Stalinist and other elements in China both within and outside of the communist structure." This was to be accomplished primarily by promoting carefully regulated trade between China and the West. The President rejected an alternative strategy of seeking to isolate China, on the grounds that such a policy would only reinforce that nation's dependence on the Soviet Union.

With the outbreak of the Korean War, the Truman Administration's attempts to wean China away from Russia came to grief. But according to Gaddis, American policy-makers never abandoned the hope of exacerbating Sino-Soviet tensions. Even President Eisenhower's redoubtable Secretary of State, John Foster Dulles, whose public pronouncements seemed to endorse the idea of "monolithic Communism," in reality believed that an alert and enlightened American diplomacy could pry the two Communist giants apart.

In one significant respect, however, the Eisenhower-Dulles "wedge strategy" differed from the Truman-Acheson approach: whereas the Truman Administration believed in encouraging China's defection from the Soviet bloc through economic inducements, the Eisenhower Administration believed that the best way of provoking a Sino-Soviet split over the long-run was by *increasing* China's dependence on Moscow over the short-run. As Dulles put it to British Prime Minister Churchill and French Foreign Minister Bidault in December 1953:

> The best hope for intensifying the strain and difficulties between Communist China and Russia would be to keep the Chinese under maximum pressure rather than by relieving such pressure. . . . Pressure and strain would compel them to make more demands on the USSR which the latter would be unable to meet and the strain would consequently increase. . . . This was the course to be followed rather than to seek to divide the Chinese and the Soviets by a sort of competition with Russia as to who would treat China best.

Professor Gaddis characterizes this approach as an attempt to split the Sino-Soviet alliance through fusion rather than fission. He cites newly released documents to buttress his contention that the Eisenhower Administration's support of Nationalist China during the Quemoy and Matsu crises of 1954-1955 and 1958 did not simply reflect the power of the "China Lobby," but was carefully designed to implement the "wedge through pressure" strategy by forcing the Chinese to turn to Russia for help. Gaddis goes on to point out that students of Chinese-Russian relations believe that Russia's reluctance to provide China with assistance during the two

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Quemoy-Matsu crises was crucial in precipitating the split between Moscow and Peking. Gaddis's conclusion is therefore as inescapable as it is surprising: Along with Mao Tse-tung, Joseph Stalin, and Nikita Khrushchev, John Foster Dulles deserves to be recognized as one of the major architects of the Sino-Soviet dispute.

But if Gaddis's essay on American strategy toward the Communist world is an excellent example of how historical scholarship can renew our respect for Western statesmanship and enlarge our sense of diplomacy's possibilities, another essay in this collection can serve as a case study of virtually all of the myths and illusions that have prevented Americans from thinking sensibly about the Soviet Union. Entitled, like the book itself, "The Long Peace," it seeks to explain why Russia and America, despite all their disagreements, have never gone to war.

According to Gaddis, there are several factors, apart from the existence of nuclear weapons, that have served to moderate Soviet-American antagonisms. To begin with, since 1945 the United States and the Soviet Union have gradually evolved a series of "rules" to govern their rivalry. Admittedly, these rules are implicit rather than explicit, but thanks to the insights of modern game theory we are able to detect their presence. Thus, both the Soviet Union and the United States have implicitly agreed to respect each other's spheres of influence; both "prefer predictable anomaly over unpredictable rationality" (whatever that means); and both have agreed not to undermine the other side's leadership. Without such rules, Gaddis informs us, "the correlation one would normally expect between hostility and instability would have become more exact than it has in fact been since 1945."

Another "behavioral mechanism that has sustained the post-World War II international system" is the decline of ideology in both the Soviet Union and the United States. Indeed, for Gaddis ideology is the great enemy of "stability": "Both the Soviet ideological aversion to capitalism and the American ideological aversion to totalitarianism could have produced policies—and indeed have produced policies in the past—aimed at the complete overthrow of their respective adversaries." Fortunately, Soviet-American relations today reflect "a new maturity . . . an increasing commitment on the part of both great nations involved to a 'game' played 'by the rules.'"

But "the preservation of stability" requires something more than the abandonment of ideological fervor; it calls for "the realization that great nations have a stake, not just in the survival, but also the success and prosperity of their rivals." History teaches us that when great nations decline, their behavior "can become erratic, even desperate, well before physical strength itself has dissipated." The United States therefore has a stake in preventing the Soviet Union's decline as a world power, and the Soviet Union has a similar stake in preventing America's decline. For as Gaddis concludes, "International systems, like tangoes, require at least two reasonably active and healthy participants."

Now, in all fairness to Gaddis, one hastens to point out that he is not alone in holding these views. In fact, a decade ago they were accepted by much of the foreign policy establishment, and formed the intellectual rationale for the policy known as "détente." One would recall that the views he espouses today were subjected to a devastating critique by conservative and neoconservative intellectuals during the 1970s—a critique that succeeded in depriving "détente" of much of its intellectual respectability.

At the core of this critique was an emphasis on the singularity of the Soviet system, on the need to analyze it with much the same degree of care and sophistication that Gaddis brings to the study of American history. Indeed, the conservative/neoconservative critique was strikingly similar to Gaddis's own criticism of his fellow historians, in that it too rejected excessive emphasis on the techniques of political science in favor of greater attentiveness to the intellectual framework underlying Soviet foreign policy. This framework it located in Leninist doctrine, which is less an ideology than an "operational code" for seizing and maintaining power. Whatever the nature of their ideological convictions, critics of "détente" argued, the members of the Soviet ruling class have been trained to think in Leninist terms, and to discuss Soviet foreign policy without reference to Leninism (as theorists of "détente" did in the 1970s, and as Gaddis does today) is as futile an exercise as, let us say, describing American postwar diplomacy without mentioning containment.

Judging by his approach to American history, one would have expected Gaddis to be quite sympathetic to this line of argument. That he is in fact quite unsympathetic, that he has paid "curiously little attention" to what he himself has written in a different context, is a mystery surely greater than the question of why Americans and Russians have so far failed to blow each other up. □

REMAKING JAPAN: THE AMERICAN OCCUPATION AS NEW DEAL

Theodore Cohen, edited by Herbert Passin/The Free Press/$27.50

Joshua Muravchik

The transformation of Japan into a thriving modern democracy was an extraordinary feat of social engineering. It was of course effected coercively, but the American occupation ended thirty-five years ago and the institutions it implanted have endured and grown stronger. This suggests that the occupation succeeded in changing not merely structures but hearts and minds as well, an accomplishment all the more impressive because the Japanese are an insular people with a distinctive and highly developed culture that had not previously sustained democracy.

Numerous officials who served in the occupation, from General MacArthur and his deputy General Courtney Whitney on down, have written accounts of it, but none that I have seen is as good as Theodore Cohen's. Cohen, the son of Russian Jewish immigrants, stumbled into Japanese studies at City College in the 1930s. Like so many of his classmates of similar background (including his illustrious cousin, Daniel Bell), Cohen was a Marxist of sorts and therefore gravitated to labor studies. As a result, when the occupation came, Cohen, though not yet twenty-eight years old, found himself one of America's few authorities on Japanese labor and was named as chief of the occupation's Labor Division. He married a Japanese and settled in Tokyo after the occupation, making a career as a businessman. His book was published in Japanese in 1983, the year of his death, and only now comes to us in English.

Cohen aims to explain why the occupation succeeded so well, but the reader needn't accept all of Cohen's arguments to profit from the light he sheds on this most intriguing question. Just how intriguing is underscored by the reminders Cohen gives us of the skepticism expressed at the time by experts that the occupation could in fact succeed in democratizing Japan. Joseph Grew, the State Department's regnant authority on Japan, told President Truman that "from the long-range point of view, the best we can hope for is a constitutional monarchy, experience having shown that democracy in Japan would never work." Moreover, the mystery only deepens when one considers the brevity of the occupation. It lasted less than seven years, and the period of political reform was even shorter. After only a year and a half, "MacArthur announced that the Occupation had no further major democratic reforms to propose." Nor was the occupation carried out flawlessly: Cohen argues that major mistakes were made, and he livens his account with anecdotes about minor foibles, such as the decision by some low-level official "to sponsor square dancing and billiards for the Japanese as obviously more democratic than geisha dances and *kendo* sword-fighting."

Though famously insular, the Japanese had twice before in their history given themselves to great spasms of cultural borrowing: from China in the seventh and eighth centuries and from Europe, notably Prussia, in the nineteenth. Thus when the occupation came, the Japanese had precedent for wholesale adoption of foreign ways. Drawing an analogy to the two earlier periods, Cohen calls the occupation, and the Japanese response to it, Japan's "third turn." Their shattering defeat left the Japanese especially receptive to change. They "were in a mood to question everything to which they had been loyal," says Cohen. And America offered a powerful alternative, enhanced by the fact that "it had proved more successful" in battle and by the beneficence of the occupiers which stunned the Japanese (who themselves had exhibited nothing of the sort in the lands they occupied and who expected the worst from their conquerors). Cohen says: "Personal fraternization, demonstrating a freer and kindlier way of life . . . was the secret weapon of the early Occupation."

The occupation had another main weapon, as well, although hardly a secret one: Douglas MacArthur. "MacArthur bestrode the land like a Colossus, and the Japanese called him 'father,'" says Cohen. He had an instinct for conducting himself in such a way that obedience was exacted from

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the Japanese with minimum violence to their sense of right order. Cohen provides a nicely balanced portrait of MacArthur in Japan, a happy contrast to so much of the one-sided literature about the Supreme Commander, whether pro or con. Cohen criticizes MacArthur as self-promoting:

> Important Headquarters measures were . . . taken in the name of the Supreme Commander, not the United States, and were accompanied by thunderous press statements emphasizing the revolutionary and epochal features of each successive action. In the heady days of the autumn of 1945, the word went around Headquarters, not entirely a joke, that the Supreme Commander had to be presented with one epochal achievement a week.

Yet Cohen also vividly illustrates how MacArthur's egotism sometimes worked to Japan's, and America's, interest. Because Japan was his turf, MacArthur protected it, such as against demands that Japan's industrial plant be offered up in reparations to the Allies. Cohen describes with patent admiration the stratagems by which MacArthur sabotaged the entire program. At the conclusion of MacArthur's deep stall, a share of Japan's machine tools had been disbursed to the allies. "The total value," says Cohen, "was put at some $20 million, about 2 percent of what the Russians took out of Manchuria—in one-fifth the time."

As for MacArthur's political views, Cohen writes: "Far from being a convinced ideological rightist, the General was a political primitive with wide open spaces where his reactionary principles were supposed to be." MacArthur's politics were in fact shaped by an intense patriotism that entailed veneration of the revolutionary principles—liberty, democracy, equal rights—that constitute the American creed. With the self-confidence and command of a monarch, MacArthur proceeded to impose that revolution on Japan.

Yet he could not have succeeded, argues Cohen, had the occupation's democratic reforms not been reinforced by rapid economic recovery. Cohen identifies several sources of that recovery. First came emergency food aid from the United States that averted starvation while the economy was restarted. MacArthur secured aid in quantities that even exceeded Japan's needs, says Cohen, by warning Congress that anything less would require more troops to keep the peace. In the next few years, economic renewal was also fueled by war stockpiles that had been hidden by untold numbers of Japanese as defeat grew imminent to avoid confiscation by the victors. Gradually these stockpiles seeped into the postwar economy, an invisible but vital form of capital. Then in 1950 North Korea invaded South Korea, and, as Cohen tells it: "In a matter of days the U.S. army was turning to Japan to provide large quantities of all kinds of military support supplies. . . . Suddenly Japanese makers were besieged with orders for rush shipment, price secondary. . . . Within only a month, the visible effect was startling."

But in Cohen's view, the key to the Japanese economic miracle and hence to the success of Japan's political transformation was a version of the New Deal that MacArthur imposed on Japan. It consisted of a land reform that made Japanese peasants the owners of their own plots and a labor reform that encouraged millions of workers to join unions. "The liberation of the peasantry and the freedom of labor unions to bargain collectively created for the first time in Japan's history a domestic mass-consumer market in depth," he says. This domestic market was essential to Japan's spectacular rise as an exporter, Cohen argues, by allowing Japanese manufacturers to develop and perfect their products before sending them abroad.

The occupation, however, was not entirely a success, in Cohen's view. A severe austerity program was forced on Japan over MacArthur's objections in 1949, designed to stem Japanese inflation and reduce the U.S. foreign aid burden. This step and a reckless purge of Communists, which Cohen says actually targeted fewer Communists than non-Communist radicals and labor militants, bought America considerable bad will among intellectuals, civil servants, and other sectors of Japanese society. Especially painful to Cohen, Japanese labor turned neutralist or anti-American. The result, he says, was "an incomplete alliance," for America a self-inflicted wound.

Given his pedigree as an anti-Stalinist radical at CCNY in the 1930s, I am willing to accept Cohen's word, as I would that of few others, that non-Communist radicals were mistaken for Communists in the later occupation purges, but I wonder if the causes and consequences of anti-Americanism among sectors of the Japanese populace aren't somewhat overdrawn in his account. Given that America smashed Japan in war, annihilating its cities and dropping two atomic bombs on it; that we then remade it to a great extent in our own image; that we then provided it with a great deal of aid (something that seems so often to breed resentment); and that to this day we provide for its defense, I suspect it was inevitable that anti-Americanism would be an active facet of Japanese life. Pride and the human psyche ordain it. But the larger fact is that anti-Americanism does not dominate Japanese life; it remains a dissent, a countercurrent.

Our alliance with Japan may be in some ways "incomplete"—especially in Japan's failure to shoulder the burdens of its own defense—but it remains strong. And Japan remains a democratic model to the rest of Asia and an economic powerhouse. These are the fruits of a brilliantly effective U.S. policy, and we are in Theodore Cohen's debt for this fine account of it. □

THE CHILD IN TIME
Ian McEwan/Houghton Mifflin/$16.95

John Podhoretz

Ian McEwan's *The Child in Time* is an affecting, carefully observed, and beautifully written novel about the abduction of a small child and the catastrophic impact of that monstrous action on the child's parents. But telling this story simply and plainly wasn't enough for its author, who has burdened his slight tome with interesting but meandering disquisitions on the nature of time, an unwarranted intrusion of precious fantasy, and a vulgar bit of political satire.

McEwan clearly intends these appurtenances to distinguish his novel, and critics like the *Wall Street Journal*'s Richard Locke have taken the bait. But in truth, McEwan's asides and subplots are awkward and inappropriate inter-

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ludes that do not do justice to the rest of the book. When McEwan forgets these foolish and dilatory games, *The Child in Time* comes to life as a marvelous piece of popular sentimental fiction of the sort that British novelists used to excel at before they became, on the whole, scatological swine.

A few years after his daughter Kate was stolen from under his nose in a London supermarket, Stephen Lewis is living in a perplexed stupor. A successful author of children's books, he has ceased working, has separated from his wife, and now centers his life on a rather desultory official commission on child care. The commission meets once a week, to hear nonsensical proposals for new alphabets and the like, and during these meetings Stephen relives with fatalistic intensity the events of the past years.

He continually re-creates every single detail, thought, emotion in those seemingly meaningless minutes before the child-snatching and afterwards: "Somehow, in no time at all, it was generally known that she was three, that she was last seen at the checkout, that she wore green dungarees and carried a toy donkey. The faces of mothers were strained, alert. Several people had seen the little girl riding in the cart. Someone knew the color of her sweater. The anonymity of the city store turned out to be frail, a thin crust beneath which people observed, judged, remembered." This tour-de-force scene, and a few others like it, testify to McEwan's formidable powers of description and observation.

McEwan also excels at delineating the shifting character of Stephen's distress, from relentless activity in pursuit of the child he can never find and then his fixed, rootless despair. He and his wife Julie, fiercely in love, nonetheless turn on each other emotionally: she considers Stephen's ceaseless quest a form of denial while he considers her mute and motionless grief a self-indulgent wallow.

This is all heartbreaking and convincing, even though McEwan makes much more of the distortions of "time" that Stephen suffers than the book warrants. Basically, most of *The Child in Time* is a collection of Stephen's remorseful flashbacks and current despair, and thus no more experimental in form than a Trollope narrative. But McEwan feels obliged to introduce a physicist to explain that time is relative, while Stephen has what turns out to be an accurate vision of his newly pregnant mother and panicked father discussing whether he should be aborted. McEwan strains for metaphysical depth and achieves only preciousness.

That preciousness extends to McEwan's portraiture. Stephen and Julie are heavily romanticized characters from whom McEwan has no distance and with whom he shares almost every emotion; at times he seems like Dickens, weeping as he commits the abduction of Little Kate to paper. It seems to the reader that the Lewis home was nothing less than perfect before the disaster, like the Lewises themselves. Their responses to the ordeal feature not a moment of moral ambiguity; they behave wonderfully, even in grief, intending no one else any harm, envying no one else their children, and only coming apart because they misunderstand the nature of each other's grief.

Their spiritual perfection—particularly Stephen's—roots the book firmly in the British literary tradition devoted to demonstrating the noble heroism of the "man of sentiment." Stephen is not man as he is, but man as we would wish him to be. This portrait (clearly an idealized self-portrait) is without blemish, while Julie is a wish-fulfillment of an earth-mother wife, as sexy as she is serious, as loving as she is talented. These two make a marriage, face adversity, fall apart, and come finally to a resolution in a manner as pleasing and uplifting, and as cheap, as a really good TV movie.

McEwan is so close to his characters that he never comes near what would be the real resentment on Julie's part: the fact it was on Stephen's watch that Kate was stolen. Not only resentment, but even perhaps a little relief that it was he and not she? But dealing with such questions would make this a different novel, while on its own sentimental terms it really is quite good enough.

That is, except for McEwan's pretentious puffery. For no discernible reason, the book is set a few years in the future, and presents a Labour party view of a Britain under the continuing dominance of Margaret Thatcher. In this brave new world, beggars are licensed by the state, and everywhere are the signs of a new form of welfare-state Social Darwinism. Stephen's panel meets to discuss appropriate measures of child-rearing, but it turns out that it is all a sham; the Prime Minister has written the guidebook already, and it is full of pull-yourself-up-by-your-bootstraps rhetoric that is unconvincing in its extremism.

But McEwan hits his nadir in a peculiar and unnecessary scene in which Stephen encounters the Prime Minister (clearly Thatcher, though she goes unnamed and even unsexed). The Prime Minister comes to his house, complete with nuclear hotline phone, in order to profess passion for his friend Charles Darke, once his publisher, a junior minister in her cabinet, and now a secretly raging madman who has decided to become a little boy again by living in a treehouse high atop a forest in Suffolk.

The pointlessness of the scene, as well as the distasteful method of inventing a fictional situation and then sticking a real person in it to make that real person look bad and foolish, testifies to McEwan's incapacity to look at his own work critically and hack away at the nonsense. Had he done so, he would have come out with a better novel.

But that book would be getting a less rapturous press. In *The Child in Time*, McEwan reveals his mastery of the art of sprinkling pretentious sugar over essentially sentimental cereal and waiting for others to call it ambrosia. □

AND THE BAND PLAYED ON: POLITICS, PEOPLE AND THE AIDS EPIDEMIC

Randy Shilts/St. Martin's Press/$24.95

Michael Fumento

The doctors at the Centers for Disease Control in Atlanta called him "Patient Zero." A stunningly handsome French-Canadian airline steward, Gaetan Dugas had over 2500 male sexual partners on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean by the time he died at age 31. It was in France, the doctors think, that he picked up the AIDS virus. Thence he brought the virus to both San Francisco and New York, where he infected partners through anonymous bathhouse sex and pickups from gay bars. At least forty of the first 248 homosexuals diagnosed with AIDS as of April 12, 1982 had had sex either with Dugas or with someone who had. ("Typhoid Mary" Mallon, by contrast, had fifty-three confirmed cases attributed to her, of whom three died.) Long after his diagnosis, Dugas would sodomize willing partners in dimly lit cubicles, then turn up the lights and point to the purplish Kaposi's sarcoma lesions on his skin. "I've got gay cancer," he would say. "I'm going to die, and so are you."

No one will ever be certain whether Dugas was the one who began the AIDS epidemic in the United States, but it would be fitting if he was. For the way he continued business as usual—or pleasure, as it were—even after his diagnosis is representative of the larger tale of miscreants and fools told in Randy Shilts's *And the Band Played On*, a remarkable feat of investigative journalism that traces the AIDS epidemic from the death of Danish physician Margrethe Rask, a lesbian who contracted AIDS in Africa in 1976, up to mid-1985 and the death of Rock Hudson. An openly homosexual writer for the *San Francisco Chronicle* and the nation's first full-time AIDS reporter, Shilts names names, slams reputations, and yet poignantly testifies to those few who fought desperately to get the band's attention and those who died horribly while it continued to play.

Introducing the members of the band:

"Fast lane" homosexuals. Some homosexuals racked up as many as a mind-boggling 20,000 sexual partners, engaging in high-risk (receptive anal) acts long after it became apparent that a fatal illness was spreading through the homosexual populations of New York, San Francisco, and Los Angeles. Scoffing at advice to limit partners and avoid such activity, many homosexuals continued going to bathhouses, readily infecting themselves with the AIDS virus and passing it on to others. Homosexual leaders such as Konstantin Berlandt, a columnist for the *Bay Area Reporter*, shed new light on the debate over whether homosexuality is genetic or acquired by stating, "I didn't become a homosexual so I could use condoms." Later Berlandt wrote: "Advice on safe sex, while perhaps well-meaning, is actually collaboration with the death regime that delights in blaming ourselves and would pin the blame on us." Berlandt also used his column to make a pitch for "rimming," known in other circles as oral-anal contact and then considered to be a high-risk activity for contracting AIDS. According to Berlandt, the practice could be "spiritually uplifting."

Other homosexuals saw profit in the epidemic, as did the San Mateo doctor who promised to cure AIDS with massive doses of—you guessed it—Vitamin C. Still others made desperate efforts to pretend that the syndrome was not sexually transmitted, such as the homo-

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sexual psychologist who wrote a series of articles maintaining that AIDS victims all had suffered an "emotional emergency" as children that was now manifesting itself as fatal immune suppression.

The bathhouse owners. Even before AIDS, notes Shilts, "the bathhouses were a horrible breeding ground for disease. . . . A Seattle study of gay men suffering from shigellosis [a parasitic disease most efficiently transmitted by ingestion of feces], for example, discovered 69 percent culled their sexual partners from bathhouses. A Denver study found that an average bathhouse patron having his typical 2.7 sexual contacts risked a 33 percent chance of walking out of the tubs with syphilis or gonorrhea. . . ." All of which prompted one doctor in 1980 to remark, "If something new gets loose here, we're going to have hell to pay." Yet even after hell broke loose, bathhouse owners refused to close up shop or even display safe-sex posters. Instead, they treated the AIDS epidemic in the way Amity businessmen treated news of the shark in the movie *Jaws*—the less said, the better. As one callous owner explained to Dr. Paul Volberding, "We're both in it for the same thing. Money. We make money at one end when they come to the baths. You make money from them on the other end when they come out."

The San Francisco Health Department, which recently forbade all smoking in government offices on public health grounds, delayed putting restrictions on the bathhouses for several years so as to not offend the homosexual lobby. It wasn't until 1987 that the last bathhouse closed its doors.

Blood bank operators. Like the bathhouse owners, blood bank operators faced the AIDS problem by ignoring it. By late 1981 there was reason to believe that AIDS was a bloodborne virus like hepatitis B and that it would turn up in blood transfusions; by mid-1982 the CDC had reported that hemophiliacs had contracted AIDS through clotting factor. Yet in December 1982 an officer of the American Association of Blood Banks went on network television to say flatly that there still was no evidence that transfusions spread AIDS. It's not that there was no way to screen blood. One method, rejected as too expensive, was to test for antibodies to the core of the hepatitis B virus, antibodies ubiquitous in the blood of AIDS patients. Another method was to ask members of high risk groups to exclude themselves voluntarily.

But at a meeting of all the major blood banking organizations it was announced that no such screening would be tolerated. "Direct or indirect questions about a donor's sexual preference are inappropriate," read the official statement. Dr. Roger Enlow, a New York homosexual physician and a leader of the American Association of Physicians for Human Rights, praised the policy. "We've preserved not just gay rights," he said, "but the human right to privacy and individual choice." Except, of course, for those who chose not to die of a horrible disease simply because they needed blood products. In his epilogue Shilts writes, "An estimated 12,000 Americans were infected from transfusions largely administered after the CDC had futilely begged the blood industry for action to prevent the spread of the disease."

Homosexual Rights Groups and the Media. Shilts is not shy about going after his own. The book is replete with examples of callousness, overcaution, and sheer idiocy on the part of so-called gay rights organizations which consistently fought efforts to save homosexual lives—including such efforts as voluntary testing—alleging such measures were but the first step toward slapping pink triangles onto homosexuals and marching them off to the gas chambers. Shilts has told one writer that the press's lack of AIDS coverage—until, that is, the disease appeared to threaten heterosexuals and until the death of Rock Hudson—makes it the "one institution with the most blood on its hands."

Public Health Authorities. The argument that public health officials and the Reagan Administration shortchanged AIDS research until it was perceived as a national, and not just a homosexual and drug addict, problem is much more contestable. Hindsight is always 20-20; it's easy to see now that much more money should have been spent much more quickly on AIDS. But hindsight also tells us that those same public health authorities strongly overreacted to the Swine Flu scare in the mid-1970s. Would funding have been substantially different if the afflicted had been, to use one congressman's comparison, tennis players instead of homosexuals? This is something that Shilts can't establish, even with the hundreds of memos he obtained through the Freedom of Information Act.

Shilts can't resist a parting shot at President Reagan. "Already," writes Shilts, "some said Ronald Reagan would be remembered in history books for one thing beyond all else: He was the man who had let AIDS rage through America, the leader of the government that when challenged to action had placed politics above the health of the American people." That may be how some homosexuals will view Reagan's presidency, but most historians, with the help of Shilts's book, will conclude that, although many share the blame for the AIDS epidemic, those primarily responsible were its prime victims, the homosexuals themselves. The issue is not and never has been, as Konstantin Berlandt contends (in Shilts's paraphrase), "society's responsibility to find the medical technology to prevent all sexually transmitted diseases rather than the gay community's responsibility to keep sexuality in line with what medical technology can cure." □

CORRESPONDENCE

(continued from page 7)

during my eleven years there. But, most of all, I am inspired that the ideals with which so many of us baby boomers were raised (by our WW II veteran fathers and mothers) are now presented by *TAS*, while the liberal ideas of "The Spectator" have gone out of print.

—Bruce Sutchar
Evanston, Illinois

Ouch! The extended quotation from the University of Wisconsin *Badger Herald* in the 20th Anniversary issue's best of "Current Wisdom" may have given your readers the wrong impression about our paper.

The *Badger Herald* is the nation's only daily, independent student newspaper which also boasts a conservative-to-libertarian editorial page. The paper came to life in the late sixties precisely because the kind of drivel you quoted was going unchallenged in the University's official student newspaper, the *Daily Cardinal.* Our birth was greeted with bomb threats, confiscations, and all else that passes for dialectic engagement on the left.

The rationale for printing Linda Evans's graceless musings in the *Herald* is probably irretrievably lost—you note that it appeared in April 1971—but as an editorial writer for the *Herald*, let me assure you that her comments reflect neither the spirit nor substance of our editorial writings in the eighties.

I look to *TAS* for information and inspiration, and to see our name printed without qualification on the same page with *Ms.*, the *Washington Post*, and the *New Yorker*, is, well, a little disheartening. *—David Gammon*
Editorial Writer
Badger Herald
Madison, Wisconsin

Three cheers for *The American Spectator* and for the Twentieth Anniversary issue. I don't know how you fit so many top-notch conservative voices in 110 pages, but I know I'll be reading and re-reading the December issue well into next spring.

Two-and-a-half cheers for George Gilder's somewhat rambling essay "The Message of the Microcosm." Those of us who toil in the high-tech vineyards have commented for years on the irrelevance of most economic theories when confronted by new technologies.

The business of America is invention, and Gilder is correct in pointing out that the calculation of productivity and trade deficits ignores the wealth-producing power of cheap, accessible new tools. A plant in Osaka that licenses an American design to produce a $10 microchip makes it possible for a software house in Cambridge to develop a $10,000 information system.

But Gilder invokes the evangelical patter of Silicon Valley—extolling the *information economy*, predicting *new harmonies of integrated knowledge*, describing the *collapse of time and space*—to equate technological progress with electronic computing. While the computer is an extremely important component, high tech is not limited to chips and floppies.

Chemical technologies bring us plastic hipbones, the Green Revolution, and one-calorie diet cola. Construction technologies help us build bigger bridges, smarter buildings, and safer highways. Biotechnologies are fighting diseases, cleaning up oil spills, and making new life forms possible.

What's important here is not analog circuitry, encyclopedic databases, or fiber optics, but the fact that components—hardware, software, prefab wall units, bacterial molds—are trivially inexpensive when measured against the benefits they can deliver—*if applied properly.*

In a world where wealth is created not by digging rocks out of the ground but by rearranging software codes, gas molecules, and strands of DNA, only a society that nurtures invention can be called wealthy. That's the American advantage—not punching out components but linking them together into new applications.

We need some clear thinking about the way technology works and about how the tools we use change the kind of people we become. Nineteenth-century concepts like labor and capital are not very helpful, nor are twentieth-century organization charts, five-year plans, or anything that requires a committee.

Economic policy should support invention and enterprise, not protect ignorance and bureaucracy. In the debate over trade deficits and government intervention, let's hope we don't lose sight of the source of our success in high tech. *—Jack Powers*
New York, New York

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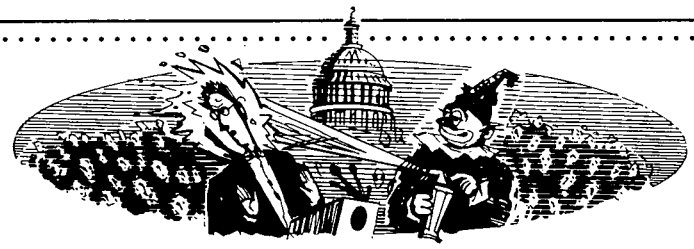

GORBASMS

On the Monday afternoon before the summit, after Gorbi had landed at Andrews Air Force base but before the festivities had begun, the Official International Press Center in the J. W. Marriott Hotel was quiet—sleepy, even. But already there were depressing signs of what the week held in store for the press. Camera crews, finding themselves with nothing to do, started filming things. With bright lights fastened to the tops of their cameras and soundmen in train, the cameramen filmed the empty podium at the front of the room, the charwomen emptying ashtrays, the television monitors tuned to CNN, the countless reporters who were busy interviewing other reporters, and, at last, in that eerie, metaphysically disconcerting reflex, they filmed each other filming each other. Into this torpor ambled Marlin Fitzwater, the President's genial press secretary, to deliver an unheralded but deeply significant quote that in retrospect seems to sum up summit week. His tie loosened, his shirt-sleeves rolled up, Fitzwater chatted informally with the desperate reporters. He slipped into his Press Secretary mode only briefly, when someone asked him what his boss would say at the lighting of the national Christmas tree that evening. "The President," said Marlin, "will use the ceremony to draw an analogy between the Christmas season and the kind of peace he's hoping for in the summit." We're all familiar with the phenomenon of moral equivalence, in which arguments are formulated in such a way as to accord identical moral standing to the Soviet Union and the United States, or Congress and the Politburo, or Gorbachev and Reagan. And now here was a spokesman for the President of the United States extending that odious practice to an unthought-of extreme: moral equivalence between Gorbachev and *Santa*. The Reagan Era is indeed over.

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Of course, Reagan too seemed a captive of the Christmas spirit in the weeks leading up to the summit, and during the summit itself. His address at the welcoming ceremony for Gorbachev on the south lawn of the White House was a case in point. With Gorbi grinning and nodding at his right, Reagan remarked approvingly that "many Americans have sent you the keys to their homes." The old Reagan would have been the first to advise these foolish people to get their locks changed but quick; instead, the President continued lamely in the same vein: "I've often thought," he said, "that we should have been better friends long ago." Now he tells us. Many voters, certainly most who would style themselves Reaganites, thought that when they threw in with Reagan they were electing a man who could go toe-to-toe with the Russkies and remain steely-eyed, meanwhile keeping the peaceniks at bay; sort of a decorous Curtis LeMay. Now it appears we elected Will Rogers. "For Americans," he informed Gorbachev, "an adversary is a friend they haven't met yet." Make that Mister Rogers.

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About halfway through the summit a liberal British journalist said to me, "The story here is not Gorbachev, not his wife, not the INF treaty, not even the summit as an event. The real story is Ronald Reagan himself, the wonderful change this man has gone through." He meant the transformation of the gunslinging cowboy of left-wing mythology into the sober, "realistic" leader with visions of a "nuclear-free world" dancing in his head. The Brit was partly speaking from the desperation that overtook many journalists when they realized that for all the hoopla, objectively there wasn't much of a story anywhere in the summit—thus the real story had to be something less obvious, calling for some scalpel work on Reagan's psyche. But there's truth in his formulation, nevertheless. What happened to the old firebreather, anyway? Is he just trying to get Nancy off his back? Has he maybe made a deal with Maureen, whereby he'll praise Gorbachev if she agrees to move out of the White House? I raised the question with an old Reagan hand who worked closely with the President during the first term, the salad days of that splendidly destabilizing "Evil Empire" rhetoric. "Remember," he told me, "it was somebody else, a speechwriter, who came up with the talk about 'the Evil Empire' and 'the focus of evil in the modern world,' and all that. It was put in a speech and Reagan just read it—not that he didn't believe it, but it was somebody else's language, somebody else's idea to say it. Now this talk about a nuclear-free world, Reagan thought that up all by himself. That's Ronald Reagan being Ronald Reagan."

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There have been countless reasons to worry about Reagan over the past few years, but you can overdo it, and not just tactically but to the point of embarrassing yourself, assuming you're the type who can be embarrassed. After Reagan's gruesome pre-summit interview with the four network anchors, in which he said that some to his right who opposed the INF treaty had decided that a war between the U.S. and the USSR was inevitable, Howard Phillips smelled ink. At a press conference the next day, Phillips, huffing with indignation, made his now-famous pronouncement that Reagan was a "useful idiot," an intemperate chunk of hyperbole which achieved its intended purpose of getting Howie's name in the *New York Times*. For those of you who occasionally wonder how someone like Phillips has become a "spokesman" for the conservative movement, there's your answer. If he didn't exist the establishment press would have to invent him, for he and his like can always be relied upon to cough up a quote so ludicrous as to place the conservatives they are alleged to represent (all of them) far outside the realm of serious discourse. It certainly helps clear the field for left-wingers. Talk about useful idiots!

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Besides, the left-wingers don't need Phillips's help. They do quite well on their own. When reporters showed up at the Marriott press center every morning, they would find by their work stations a piece of literature, handsomely done up by something called "SummitWatch," analyzing an aspect of the INF treaty or the Start negotiations. "SummitWatch," read the brochures, "is a project of the NRDC [the National Resources Defense Council] . . . designed to assist the working press covering the Washington Summit by supplying independent data, analysis and commentary from leading independent defense and nuclear weapons experts." When an organization describes itself as "independent" twice in one sentence, you can be reasonably sure it's not. Indeed, the NRDC is famous (although not as famous as it should be) for chugging along manfully with every radical enthusiasm relating to the dreaded nukes. The Freeze, Nuclear Winter, a Comprehensive Test Ban—each at one time or another has been pushed along by the NRDC's vast resources. (For a complete itemization of the NRDC's good works, see "The Nuclear Test Ban Hoax," by Rael Jean Isaac, in the May 1987 *TAS*.) Aside from its daily press releases, perfectly timed to illuminate the arcane issues of arms control for confused reporters on deadline, SummitWatch held briefings each morning in the bourgeois cushiness of the Hay Adams Hotel. Coffee was served, and pretty girls took the reporters' names and checked their press passes. The briefing I went to, on the last day of the summit, was well attended, mostly by European reporters along with the obligatory heavy-set fellows from Tass and *Izvestia*. Carl Sagan gave the invocation, which was—how to say it?—*wide ranging*. This late in the day it is hard to remember the old Sagan, the friendly science popularizer; from the difficult business of making easy the principles of astronomy, he has descended to shilling for anti-intellectual fright-freaks, which by comparison must be a piece o' cake. (Not that he's given up the astronomy thing altogether; he did refer enthusiastically to Gorbachev's idea of a "joint manned and womanned mission to Mars.") When I asked him whether he thought better of Reagan the peacenik, he made it clear that, as far as Carl Sagan is concerned, Reagan is still in the doghouse. "This is the same Administration that warned our allies not to sell arms to Iran, and then sold arms to Iran," Sagan said. "That mined the harbors in Nicaragua, but refused to enforce sanctions against South Africa . . ." I looked around and noticed my colleagues scribbling like mad. Pretty soon he was complaining about the water supply in Reagan's America, and the literacy rate, and the deficit, and to top it all off, Detroit can't make a car that's worth a tinker's damn. Gorbachev he seemed to like a little better.

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Conservatives have long argued that arms control summits—and no matter what the Administration says, the Washington summit was first and foremost an arms control summit—play into the hands of the NRDC and its allies. The summits do this by tacitly confirming the premise that the defining characteristic of the Soviet Union, and hence of its relationship with the United States, is its possession of nuclear weapons. In truth its defining characteristic is that it is a police state with insatiable international ambitions. Throughout the summit there were reminders of that fact, in the form of demonstrations in Lafayette Square across from the White House, put on by Latvians, Poles, Lithuanians, Jews, Afghans, Estonians, Armenians, Cubans, Ukrainians, Crimeans, Ethiopians, Angolans, Vietnamese—the list goes on and on, and its length is testimony to the reach of Soviet brutality. But given the priorities of the summit, the press for the most part saw such gatherings as nothing more than splashes of local color. Haynes Johnson, one of the *Post*'s army of lugubrious moralists, took brief note of the protests, which made him feel all warm and mushy: "A stroll [through the park] showed democracy's enduring strengths: the right to dissent, to be wrong, to insult the mighty. . . . There an elderly woman jumped up and down, waving a sign and shouting. . . . A few feet away, a young woman was fervently and repeatedly shouting into a microphone. . . . As always on such occasions, they represented various ethnic, religious and national groups expressing diametrically opposite, passionately held views. All vented their feelings, pro or con . . ." Reading such guff you're entitled to ask, "As always on *what* occasions, Haynes?" What other dictator's presence could have drawn to a single place anguished Eritreans and bitter Laotians? The lesson of these "multi-ethnic" protests lay in the uniform nature of their grief, for the apparently dissimilar petitioners were bound together by a single strand: in far-flung reaches of the globe they or their friends or their families had felt the sting of the Soviet Union. But on Haynes, as on most of his colleagues and the summiteers at large, the lesson was lost. Doubtless the Soviets hoped it would be. In such fashion were the most serious men and women, whose causes should lie at the heart of America's moral ardor, reduced to the endearing eccentrics of democracy, colorful denizens of bughouse square.—*AF*

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"Jews, Jews, what's all this stuff I see on your TV about Jews! Everywhere Jews!" The speaker was Mikhail Ulianov, director of Moscow's Taganka theater who along with five Soviet editors was engaged in roundtable discussion with American counterparts in the Harcourt Brace Jovanovich offices on Connecticut Avenue three days before the summit. Ulianov, listeners were reassured by V. A. Belaev of *Ogonyok* magazine and at that moment a self-admitted Jew, is not a Jew-hater. On the contrary, he played Tevye in a Soviet production of *Fiddler on the Roof*—"and what a Tevye he played!" Then what was eating at Ulianov? It seems someone was out to undermine the Gorbachev-Reagan meeting, this chance to save humanity, Ulianov said, his neck by now at shoulder width. What if, Belaev chimed in, on the eve of a visit to Moscow by Mr. Reagan a march were to be organized by Soviet citizens outraged at U.S. intervention in Archangel back during the civil war? (Even Carl Sagan has yet to blame Reagan for that.) As for all this nonsense about "brain drain," not only did Comrade Gorbachev not say anything close to that to Tom Brokaw, but in any case it's not an issue and anyway the U.S. has always done the same thing, for instance not letting Robert Oppenheimer out for security reasons. (This last bit of disinformation was passed along by Oleg Beniuk of *Soviet Life* and the Soviet embassy.) Is it now possible in the Soviet Union to question the premises of Communism? Why of course, replied Georgi Baklanov of *Znamia*, just the other week in Leningrad there was a discussion of just this point at which two fellows got up and dismissed Communism as a Zionist concoction. Try again. What cannot be published in the Soviet Union? Well, let's see, Belaev said: pornography, racist materials, war mongering . . . You mean, just like during the time of Brezhnev? No, no, that was what is now known as the period of stagnation. Now we have *perestroika*, which is deeply embedded in the will of the masses as expressed at the Party plenum of March 1985 and reaffirmed in March 1986. The course is irreversible. What about the argument that *perestroika* is being carried out on the backs of the working class? Rubbish! It's the petty bureaucrats, the *chinovniki*, who are the real target. If you include their families, that's upwards of 60 million people. Won't throwing them out cause massive unemployment? Hell no, there are plenty of factory jobs open. What about poor Boris Yeltsin—wasn't his demise a blow to the intelligentsia, which in the West is regarded as the real force behind *perestroika*? God help us if the intelligentsia is behind anything, Baklanov replied as the others joined him in hearty laughter. Again, it's the masses who are the real force, and the course is irreversible. Do you think you'll ever get away from such slogans and clichés? What a stupid, insulting question! Back home it's the Stalinists who argue this way, emotionally, subjectively. Look buddy, I had a novel that went unpublished for twelve years that's out now, Belaev said. Yeah, and I had a movie in the can for twenty years that's finally being released, added Ulianov. Don't try to tell us nothing's changed. —*WP*

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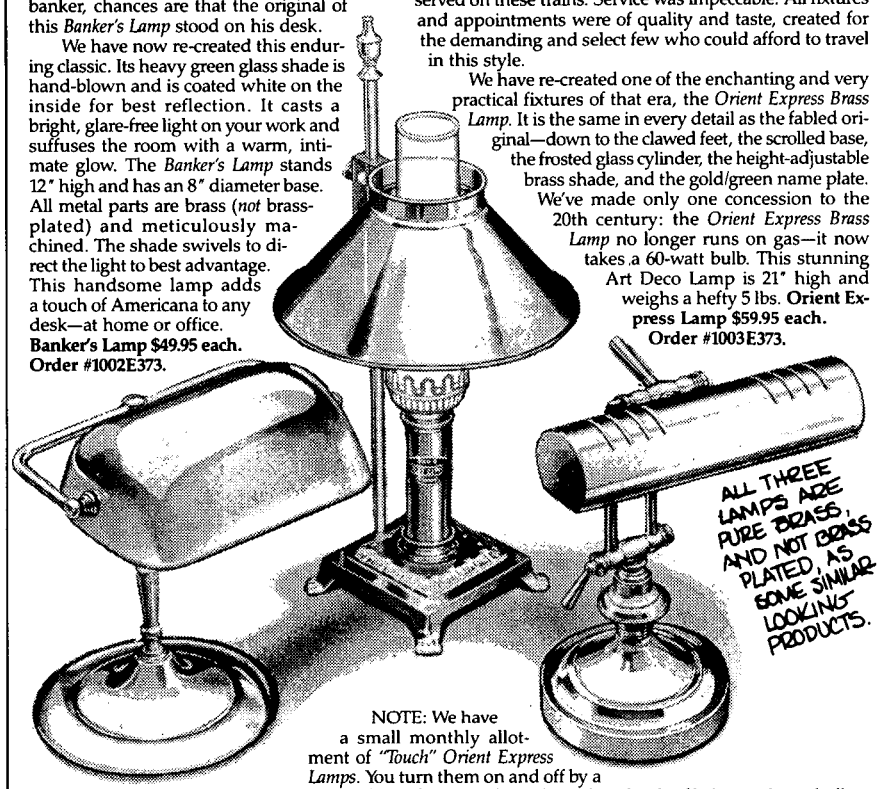

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CURRENT WISDOM

Washington Post

Young Mary McGrory, mashed on the Soviet Robert Redford:

The adjective that leaps to mind when Mikhail Gorbachev strides into a room is "clean-cut." The noun that usually accompanies it is, of course, "American." But the new star of the East has that same quality. . . .

He is a political leader to make Americans weep. None of the men who want to be president are in his league. Mario Cuomo is as smart and purposeful, but he isn't in the race and he doesn't know as much about nuclear arms.

Gorbachev has made his mark in the campaign. But he's trying to revise the famous question, "Who can stand up to Khrushchev?" to, "Who can go into the room with Gorbachev and end the arms race?"

[December 13, 1987]

Rolling Stone

Professor of belles lettres and sewage, Dr. Jonathan Cott, reports on another of J. G. Ballard's masterworks:

Ballard's controversial novel *Crash*, in fact, is a work about the psychosexuality of car wrecks ("In his vision of a car-crash with the actress, Vaughan was obsessed by many wounds and impacts—by the dying chromium and collapsing bulkheads of their two cars meeting head-on in complex collisions endlessly repeated in slow-motion films . . . by the compound fracture of their thighs impacted against their handbrake mountings, and above all by the wounds to their genitalia, her uterus pierced by the heraldic beak of the manufacturer's medallion, his semen emptying across the luminescent dials that registered for ever the last temperature and fuel levels of the engine").

[November 19, 1987]

Vegetarian Times

Adept philosophical wanderings from the editor of this sublime gazette:

"I don't really feel that I'm compromising my principles," says Alice. "I won't even eat Oreos because they're made with lard. But I've only got one mother and the salami is something she really enjoys. Besides, she's always been accepting of my views, and whenever we have dinner at her place, she always has plenty of things that I like to eat.

"Technically speaking, I suppose that buying my mother salami is logically inconsistent with my vegetarianism. But philosophically I feel my vegetarianism encompasses a broader view—a view that says 'I love you just the way you are.' I suppose I could buy her flowers or something, but maybe by buying the salami I'm telling her that I am capable of putting her happiness above my philosophy. And really, I think this kind of love and understanding is what vegetarianism is really all about."

[November 1987]

Chicago Tribune

Dizzied by the colossal sapience of Nancy the Great, this great journal of Midwestern enlightenment makes an audacious recommendation to the Nobel Prize Committee:

With the clock running and the President's disappointed right-wing followers snapping at arms control, deficit reduction and Central American peace talks, her interests today are perhaps more focused on enhancing his legacy. Since her voice appears to be one of quiet reason that Mr. Reagan hears and trusts, the First Lady should be cheered, and encouraged to pursue her efforts to the end of the presidency. Let's hope Raisa Gorbachev has as positive a role. Maybe she and Nancy Reagan could share a Nobel Peace Prize.

[December 13, 1987]

Boston Globe

A bizarre communication from the editorial page of the illustrious *Globe* of Boston:

If somebody said that in 1987 the president of a public university (a white male) would appoint eight white males as a panel to select recipients of the university's Distinguished Professional Public Service award, it would seem incredible.

And if somebody said that the award panel would choose as recipients five white males, it would seem preposterous.

Incredible or preposterous, that is what has happened at the University of Massachusetts. Unless somebody with a better sense of what is right and proper steps in and calls it off, the five white male award recipients will be honored at a reception and dinner in the Dome and Great Hall of the Quincy Market building on Nov. 20.

This charade is to be conducted a few hundred feet from Faneuil Hall, which Americans proudly regard as a cradle of this nation's freedom, liberty and equality.

[November 5, 1987]

Publishers Weekly

An auspicious send-off for an actual farrago of crazy Cockburn's gas:

Regular readers of Cockburn's stimulating and highly opinionated columns in the *Nation* and the *Wall Street Journal*, as well as his occasional articles in other publications, will hardly need any urging to snap up this first collection of his journalism. His work is pungent, witty and without pretense to that "objectivity" he so rightly sees as the bane of much written and all televised journalism. Cockburn is violently anti-Reagan, contemptuous of the press for having let him off so easily for most of his presidency and not optimistic about many of the Democrats now before the public. He is that rarity—an old-fashioned socialist thoroughly in touch with his times.

[November 13, 1987]

Medium (Rutgers University)

A lachrymose editorial on the trials that bend low the brave editors of this fabulous student newspaper, indispensable to all who frequent the Rutgers University campus for whatever reason:

The *Medium* is an open forum for opinions of all viewpoints. Unfortunately, much to our dismay and annoyance, we have for years now been branded as a "left-wing" paper and so persons with other viewpoints are hesitant to write for the *Medium*.

It's a Catch-22. We want very much to achieve a balance and overcome the stigma of being exclusively leftist but we can't because only individuals with liberal stances will contribute. . . .

So, we turned to the syndicates. We turned to George Will.

We have now decided that this was a mistake, and for the following reasons:

•First and foremost, George Will is not a Rutgers student. . . .

•We find it tacky to pay for our articles, and while we can (barely) afford it, George Will charges a fair amount.

•George Will is disproportionately persuasive in his articulation of his ideology.

•And finally, there is no way to respond to a syndicated columnist. . . .

We will stop running George Will and continue our attempts to include alternative viewpoints. We've been banging our heads against the wall trying—so far to no avail—but we'll keep trying.

We have to if we are to retain any shreds of credibility.

[September 23, 1987]

Jazz Journal International

Into the pages of the groovy *JJI* leaps a true heir to Marx and Engels, and a born dudelsock:

As a longtime student of jazz music, I would like to add to the debate raised by Messrs. Green and Lewis in June and July *JJ*. In doing so I hope my contribution will not be dismissed out of hand by those readers who perhaps perceive the idiom in a different light. . . .

The similarities between the development of jazz and the socialist experience do lend support to the argument that people of left-wing persuasion have a natural affinity with the music and its participants. I do not suggest that performers like Bessie Smith had any particular left-wing leaning; on the contrary, they mostly saw themselves as entertainers making a living. It is, however, clear that the contributions of Armstrong, Hines, Hawkins, Parker etc. helped give that music the status of an art form, against all the odds of commercialisation within a capitalist system. Ultimately these innovators left the old boundaries of the European tradition in music in ruins.

Jazz, like socialism, has always offered a radical alternative to the status quo, and this is one of the reasons why, like Mr. Green, I sense a strong affinity between jazz and the political left. —*Ron Nash*

[October 1987]

From a Federal Hoosegow

One of our hundreds of secret agents working as federal correctional officers has passed this missive on to us after copying it from the inmates' public bulletin board. Read it and recall the writings of Prof. Ronald Dworkin:

There's no way to rule innocent men. The only power any government has is to crack down on criminals. Well, when there aren't enough criminals one *makes* them. One declares so many things to be a crime that it is impossible for men to live without breaking laws. Who wants a nation of law abiding citizens? What's there in that for anyone? But just pass the kind of laws that can neither be observed nor enforced nor objectively interpreted and you create a nation of law breakers—and then you cash in on guilt. Now that's the system, that's the game, and once you understand it, you'll be much easier to deal with.

Under these conditions, a turn of incarceration is an ugly physical accident without any moral significance.

[Autumn 1987]

GQ

High adventure among the nation's electrified scribes, as reported in the egghead GQ:

With the resolve that "this is *my* life and *my* ear," *60 Minutes*' Ed Bradley has begun wearing an earring (through the left lobe. He's fairly sure that means straight in New York). He's been wanting to do this for a long time, but says that he somehow lacked "the heart" until he spent an evening with Liza Minnelli, who not only urged him to pierce his ear but gave him a diamond stud as incentive. Now Ed has an earring wardrobe: the Minnelli diamond, a little ruby, a little bone and a little ring of gold made by his womanfriend.

[December 1987]

Ms.

A New Age woman of the cloth speaks from her mind, her heart, and her merkin:

I am sick and tired of reading about how male pheromones are necessary to women's reproductive health ("The Essence of Sex," by Denise Fortino, September 1987). This is the third time I have read about it, and I find it oppressive. When this particular study is quoted, the fact that a close contact with the pheromones of other women also helps regulate the periods of both women is usually ignored. For women this contact does not have to be sexual. Living together does enough. As a lesbian, I am quite able to have good reproductive health without any sexual contact with a man, and I also find myself totally free of concern about pregnancy, AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases. Heterosexist assumptions about women's health sometimes make me sick. —*Rev. Virginia G. Miles*
Gaithersburg, Md.

[December 1987]

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The Spirit of Medieval Philosophy, by Etienne Gilson, translated by A.H.C. Downes (Sheed and Ward, 1950). **Dante and the Medieval Astronomers**, by M. A. Orr. C. L. Apple, P.O. Box 44124, Shreveport, LA 71104.

Girl of the Limberlost, by Gene Stratton Porter. **U.S. Airborne—From Boot Camp to the Battle Zones**, by Ian Padden (Bantam Books). B. A. Bennett, 4512 Hayesville Dr., NE, Salem, OR 97305.

The Watcher, by Kay Nolte Smith, (hardbound—good condition). **Ecohysterics and the Technophobes**, by Petr Beckmann. B. Lindsey, 7201 Wood Hollow #330, Austin, TX 78731.

Any book on the Zulu War of 1879 except Barthorp's and Donald Morris's.

The Red Soldier, by Frank Emery (Hodder & Stoughton, London, 1977). Richard T. Reed, 11700 Old Columbia Pike #2117, Silver Spring, MD 20904.

The New Illiterates, by Samuel L. Blumenfeld. M. Altschuler, 3451 North Ride Court, Jacksonville, FL 32217.

The International Man, by Douglas Casey (Alexandria House). **The Alpha Strategy**, by John Pugsley (Stratford Press, 1981). Edward R. Gore, 23 Robert Pearson Ct., Trenton, NJ 08610.

Decline and Fall of the Roman Church, by Malachi Martin (paperback preferred). **The Weans**, by Robert Nathan. Peter Wolmut, 5824 NE 22nd Ave., Portland, OR 97211.

The Great Terror: Stalin's Purges of the Thirties, by Robert Conquest. Ethel M. Achor, 1610 Carriage Dr., Valparaiso, IN 46383.

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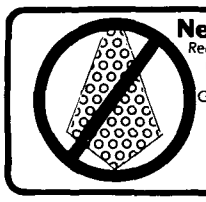

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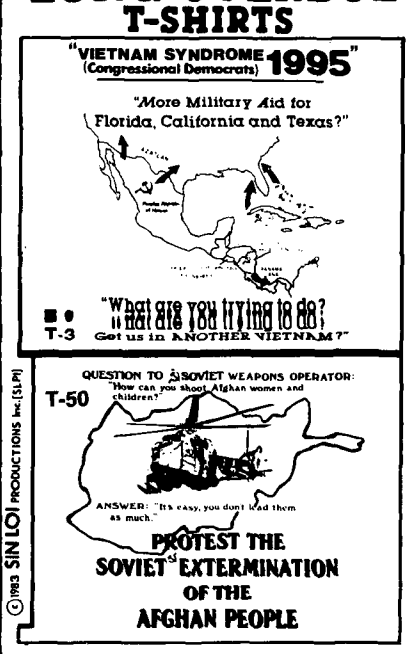
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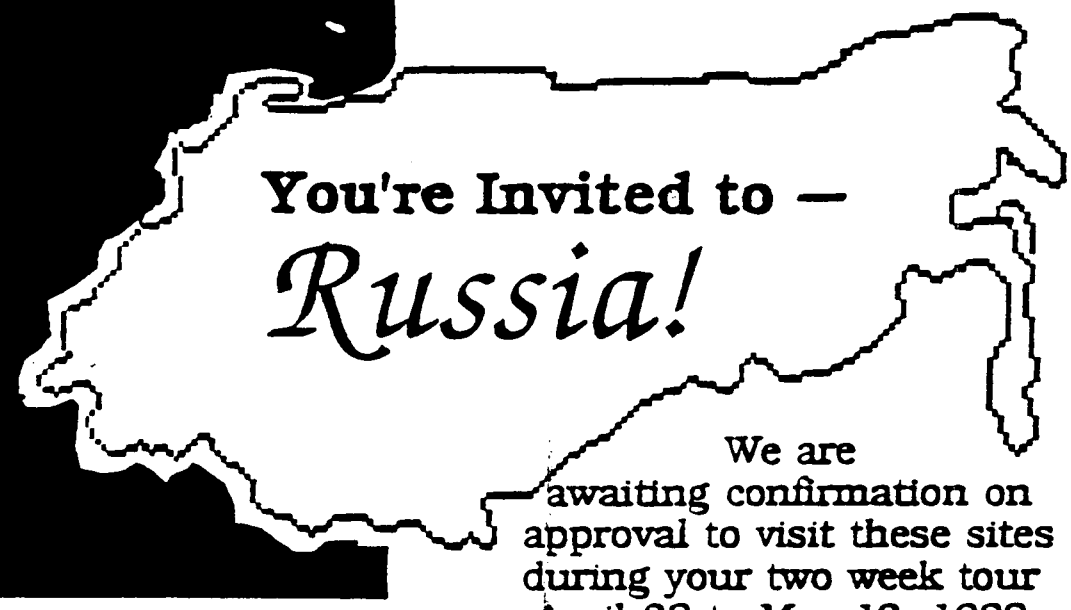

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